



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL
MID-SESSION TELECONFERENCE WITH INTERIOR DELEGATION
MARCH 10, 2020, 7:30 A.M.
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

- I. City of Fairbanks 2020 Legislative and Capital Priorities ([Resolution No. 4895, as Amended](#))
 - A. Legislative Priorities
 1. Maintain PERS contribution rates
 2. Maintain a baseline of \$60 million annually in Community Assistance Program funding
 3. Provide for a financial assistance plan to assist municipalities in investigation and cleanup efforts relating to Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (AFFF) contamination
 4. Assist with boiler conversions
 5. Concern with [HB 79](#) Reestablishing a Defined Benefit Plan for Certain Public Safety Employees
 6. SART funding and priorities
 7. Fund the Emergency Service Patrol
 - B. Capital Priorities
 1. Provide funding for construction of a law enforcement firing range and training facility
 2. Provide funding for the replacement of the City Hall heating system
- II. Other Legislative Issues for Discussion (time permitting)
 - A. [HB 87](#) Liquefied Natural Gas Storage Facility Tax Credit
 - B. [HB 262](#) Municipal Elections in October or November
 - C. [SB 115](#) Vehicle Registration Fees; Motor Fuel Tax
 - D. [SB 176](#) Regulate PFAS Use; Fire/Water Safety

RESOLUTION NO. 4895, AS AMENDED

**A RESOLUTION STATING THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS
LEGISLATIVE AND CAPITAL PRIORITIES FOR 2020**

WHEREAS, the City is grateful for the funding provided by the State of Alaska which has added significantly to the City's ability to provide essential services; and

WHEREAS, many of the services the City provides are centered on protecting the lives and property Fairbanks citizens; preparedness and infrastructure are key in that endeavor; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fairbanks has identified the following legislative and capital priorities; the public had the opportunity to speak to this Resolution at the November 25, 2019 City Council meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Fairbanks City Council that the 2020 legislative and capital priorities of the City of Fairbanks are stated in the attached list. In summary, the projects are ranked as follows:

2020 Legislative Priorities

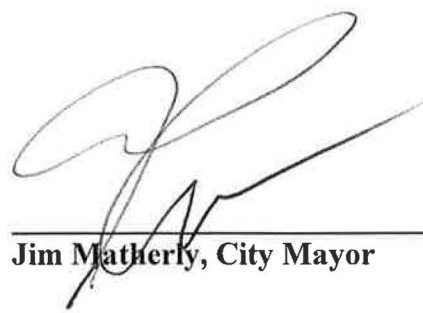
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3. Provide for a financial assistance plan to assist municipalities in investigation and cleanup efforts relating to Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (AFFF) contamination
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5. Concern with HB 79 Reestablishing a Defined Benefit Plan for Certain Employees
6. SART Funding and Priorities
7. Fund the Emergency Service Patrol

2020 Capital Priorities

1. Provide funding for construction of a Law Enforcement Firing Range and Training Facility
2. Provide funding for the replacement of the City Hall heating system

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk is directed to send copies of this resolution to the Office of the Governor and the Interior Alaska Legislative Delegation.

PASSED and APPROVED this 25th day of November 2019.




Jim Matherly, City Mayor

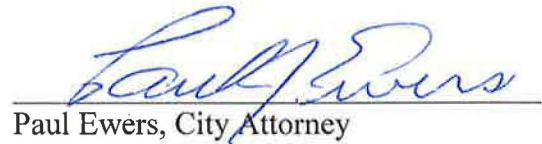
AYES: Gibson, Cleworth, Rogers, Kun, Therrien, Pruhs
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
APPROVED: November 25, 2019

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



D. Danvielle Snider, CMC, City Clerk



Paul Ewers, City Attorney



CITY OF FAIRBANKS

Jim Matherly, Mayor
800 CUSHMAN STREET
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701-4615
OFFICE: 907-459-6793
FAX: 907-459-6787
jmatherly@fairbanks.us

City of Fairbanks Legislative Priorities 2020 As Amended

- 1. PERS Contribution Rate:** The City of Fairbanks supports maintaining the 22% PERS contribution rate as was agreed to by PERS employers and the State in allocating the unfunded liability.
- 2. Community Assistance Program:** The City of Fairbanks is concerned with the yearly reductions in the community assistance program. The City requests that the State funds a baseline floor of \$60 million annually to the program.
- 3. Aqueous Film-Forming Foam Contamination Fund:** The Fairbanks Fire Department and most other firefighting services in the State of Alaska (federal, state, and local) used Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (AFFF) for suppression of petroleum-based fires. Unbeknownst to these agencies, chemicals in the AFFF are harmful to humans. AFFF was used in training exercises at the Fairbanks Regional Fire Training Center (FRFTC) by the Fairbanks Fire Department, State of Alaska agencies, i.e. Fairbanks International Airport, the University, and other firefighting agencies, and has been found in the ground water in and around the FRFTC. The City of Fairbanks is actively assessing and remedying the AFFF contamination from the FRFTC. AFFF contamination is a state-wide problem. The \$9.4M appropriated to DEC to investigate PFAS contamination is a good start, but the State needs to provide funding and assistance to municipalities for these investigations and cleanup efforts, especially when State agencies were responsible for some of the contamination.

The City of Fairbanks requests financial assistance for the City and other Alaskan municipalities which are protecting their residents from the potential health effects of PFC groundwater contamination. To date, the City of Fairbanks has spent over \$4M on remediation – an amount which has been passed along to all property owners within the city limits, including elderly home owners on a fixed income and other low-earning households. These costs are only expected to grow as the groundwater plume continues to spread.

4. **Conversion assistance:** With the completion of a 5.2M gallon LNG storage tank in Fairbanks, the local gas utility will be able to start connecting customers who already have a gas distribution system in front of their homes. The City is requesting assistance from the State in finding creative solutions as it pertains to financial assistance for residents converting their boilers from fuel oil to gas. Assistance could come in the form of tax credits, low interest loans, loan guarantees, etc. The push for these conversions should start now, with conversions occurring summer of 2020. The City also requests that the Interior Delegation work with the Congressional Delegation to elicit their assistance with federal resources, specifically EPA funding for clean air initiatives.
5. **Concern with HB 79 Reestablishing a Defined Benefit Plan for Certain Employees:** The State of Alaska in 2006 switched from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan. This change was absolutely necessary to help mitigate the alarming growth and unsustainability of the PERS unfunded liability. Despite the \$3 billion infusion by the State in 2014, the liability is again increasing. Alaska's unfunded liability on a per capita basis is \$46,774 per person, the highest in all 50 states. The City carries a liability on our books as of 12-31-18 of \$14,946,734, and the State of Alaska every year has to help pay down the debt by budgeting from \$400 to \$550 million for PERS and TRS liability reduction which are monies that could be used for education, roads, and all other governmental functions. Tier 4 employees do not receive the full benefit of the funds the City provides on their behalf. The majority of this contribution goes to pay the debt incurred under the defined benefit plan for Tier 1 to 3 employees. If a change is to be made, it should be to fix this inequity with Tier 4. Finally, HB 79 only allows certain classes of employees into this new plan, which is inherently unfair.
6. **SART Funding and Priorities:** Sexual assaults are increasing throughout the State of Alaska. \$150,000 is not enough funding to address this issue. The City of Fairbanks requests an increase in SART funding to \$350,000, with \$100,000 earmarked to Anchorage and \$100,000 earmarked to Fairbanks.
7. **Emergency Service Patrol:** The City of Fairbanks requests \$300,000 for the City's Emergency Service Patrol (ESP). Title 47 (AS 47.37) mandates that persons who are incapacitated by alcohol or drugs must be taken into protective custody by a peace officer or member of an emergency service patrol. The City seeks to continue its ESP for city-wide transport of incapacitated persons. The ESP is the most efficient and cost-effective means of meeting the state-imposed mandates under Title 47. The City police department is currently overworked and understaffed, and given the high call volume created by inebriated individuals, the presence of ESP has taken a substantial workload off of the police officers and paramedics, which allows them to focus on other critical areas of public safety.

**City of Fairbanks Capital Priorities 2020
As Amended**

- 1. Construction of a Law Enforcement Firing Range and Training Facility:** The City of Fairbanks has joined a collaborative regional effort to obtain property and construct a law enforcement firing range and training facility. The only current law enforcement range is located on the Fairbanks International Airport property. Having a shooting range/training facility on airport property has been historically problematic. The current rules surrounding the range make basic training topics and drills difficult and sometimes outright prohibited. Current rules also prohibit law enforcement from bringing citizen groups (such as citizen police academies) to the range during these public training programs. During 2018, areawide law enforcement agencies were notified the firearms training range would be shut down within the next year. There is currently no other firearms training facility within interior Alaska that is capable of functioning as a training range.

A new range facility would be open to and serve every local, state, and federal law enforcement agency within interior Alaska. It would also serve as the primary training site for our interior Alaska police academy. At a time when law enforcement is under constant scrutiny and expected to perform at the highest level of professionalism, a high level of training and a professional training environment is essential. The \$22k appropriations in the FY20 capital budget for the design of this facility is very much appreciated.

- 2. Replacement of the City Hall Heating System:** The current heating system for City Hall is the original steam heating system. This system is well beyond its life cycle and needs replacing. The magnitude of this effort, which will need to be completed within a few short summer months, is projected to cost \$5M because of the asbestos and lead-based paint that most certainly will be encountered. The City requests \$5M from the Capital program to replace the heating system.