



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, APRIL 11, 2022
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date, following a 5:30 p.m. Work Session to discuss the Fairbanks Downtown Plan, 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: Jerry Cleworth, Seat A
 June Rogers, Seat B
 Valerie Therrien, Seat C
 Aaron Gibson, Seat D
 Lonny Marney, Seat E
 Jim Clark, Seat F

Absent: None

Also Present: Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer (remotely)
 D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk
 Paul Ewers, City Attorney
 Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff
 Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager
 Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director (remotely)
 Ron Dupee, Police Chief
 Scott Raygor, Fire Chief
 Clem Clooten, Building Official (remotely)
 Jeff Jacobson, Public Works Director
 Teal Soden, Communications Director (remotely)

INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

FLAG SALUTATION

Mayor Matherly led the Flag Salutation.

CEREMONIAL MATTERS

Mayor Matherly welcomed new Fire Chief Scott Raygor and briefly spoke about his experience and history with the City. Chief of Staff Mike Sanders administered Chief Raygor's oath of office, and his wife applied his pin.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Chief Steve Ginnis, Executive Director of Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) – Chief Ginnis congratulated Chief Raygor on behalf of the FNA Board. He expressed his disappointment that the City Council had failed the land acknowledgment resolution. He shared that Native people and corporations contribute heavily to the local economy. Chief Ginnis mentioned the joint statement sent to the City Council on March 31, 2022, and the comment that followed by Council Member Clark who indicated that it was divisive measure guised as diversity. Chief Ginnis argued that the land acknowledgment is a statement built on history – not racism – and that it was important to show respect to the first people. He asked the Council to reconsider and listen to constituents.

Mr. Cleworth asked Chief Ginnis whether he believed the land acknowledgement was a political statement or a historical document. Chief Ginnis stated that it should be viewed as a statement based on history.

Dr. Jessica Black, Fairbanks – Dr. Black shared that she came from the villages of Fort Yukon and Nenana and provided a land acknowledgment. She added that she works for the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) and serves as the FNA president. Dr. Black expressed her disappointment that the Council did not pass the land acknowledgement resolution, adding that it would have been a first step in improving relationships and increasing awareness of the history of Alaska.

Ms. Therrien asked Dr. Black if she had read the proposed language, and Dr. Black said she would like to revisit it before commenting.

Sharon McConnell, Fairbanks – S. McConnell gave a land acknowledgment, noting that it was a statement of recognition for the first people of the region. She shared that she had been involved in drafting the original language proposed by the resolution and that they had been honored to be involved in the City Council's request to consider a formal land acknowledgement; she noted, however, that the version presented by the Fairbanks Diversity Council (FDC) had been heavily edited. S. McConnell shared the process behind the drafting of the original language and the disappointment of the Elders to learn that their hard work had been rewritten. She added that the Elders had been surprised that the resolution had gone before the Council and failed. She added that if they had been aware of when the resolution was to be heard, they would have testified at that time. She asked that the Council reconsider its decision and choose to acknowledge and respect the diversity of the Fairbanks community and its ancestors.

Chief Reverend Dr. Anna Frank, Fairbanks – Dr. Frank shared some of her history in the Fairbanks area, adding that she did want not to see Native children being disregarded and left out of the narrative. Dr. Frank stated that all people need to work together and respect one another, adding that values written on paper are best discussed, not simply looked at.

Reverend Shirley Lee, FNA Justice Director – Rev. Lee spoke to the history of the local ancestors and the hardships they suffered, adding that reading a small land acknowledgement before City Council meetings would go a long way in strengthening bonds. She noted that Native leadership contributes a great deal to the City and asked that the Council reconsider its action and approve a land acknowledgement.

David Costello, Fairbanks – D. Costello spoke in favor of a tax exemption for new multi-unit developments, adding that he has been a general contractor in the area for over 20 years. He noted that the proposed exemption would be in line with the recently adopted exemption by the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB). He highlighted portions of the Borough's resolution, adding that he had already applied for their exemption. He added that the process is lengthy and, if approved, he would not be able to start construction until mid- or late June.

Christina Carlson, Fairbanks – C. Carlson shared that she is the head teacher at Chinook Montessori Charter School and asked the Council to consider another ordinance to provide tax relief for charter schools; she added that such exemptions are in place in Anchorage and Mat-Su.

Tanya Kaquatosh, Fairbanks – T. Kaquatosh stated that the Doyon Corporation represents over 20,000 shareholders with more than a quarter of them living in the Fairbanks area. She shared her personal experience attending schools in the Fairbanks area, adding that she had attended Stanford and Arizona State University, where she obtained her master's degree. She spoke in support of the City adopting a land acknowledgement, likening it to the opening invocation, which she believed was given with nothing but good intentions. She added that she did not believe it was failed with intentional disrespect to the Native community, but she did believe that the relationship between the two could be improved. She stated that she would personally like to see the acknowledgement in place as a proud Native parent who is raising a proud Native daughter.

Scott McCrea, Explore Fairbanks Executive Director – S. McCrea spoke in favor of the City Council reconsidering the adoption of a land acknowledgement, noting that Explore Fairbanks had adopted the same acknowledgement the previous summer. He added that he did not feel that the reading of the acknowledgement before each meeting detracted from the business at hand. He shared that part of the Explore Fairbanks pride is in recognizing the Native culture along with the landscape and wildlife.

Roscoe Britton, No Limits Program Director – R. Britton shared that he had planned on testifying in regard to a different topic but opted to defer that testimony so that the current issue regarding the land acknowledgment could be addressed. He spoke in favor of the land acknowledgment.

David van den Berg, Downtown Association (DTA) Executive Director – D. van den Berg spoke in support of Resolution No. 5009. He also spoke to the Work Session regarding the Downtown Plan, expressing his concern that the FSNB may take some unwanted liberties. He stated it is a good idea to see an early draft of the plan so that the City may properly respond.

Tim Staton, Fairbanks – T. Staton expressed concern about vendor booth placement during the Midnight Sun Festival, adding that he had been told that planning meetings were not yet scheduled by Mr. van den Berg. He shared his desire to meet one-on-one with the DTA to discuss issues for business owners. He added that some of the statements made during the Work Session were unfair and inflammatory regarding the Parking Authority. T. Staton added that the DTA has not communicated with the Parking Authority outside of asking for information, noting that the contract between the City and the Parking Authority does not concern the DTA. He added that the DTA is detrimental to many of the downtown businesses in some respects, and that has kept some business owners from joining the organization.

Mayor Matherly asked that Mr. Staton email the Council.

Hearing no more requests for in-person comment, individuals on Zoom were heard next.

Dewey Kk'oleyo Hoffman, Fairbanks – D. Hoffman spoke in support of the resolution regarding the land acknowledgement, adding that he was the Deputy Director of Tribal Government Client Services at the Tanana Chiefs Conference. He shared an introduction in his Native language. He added that the land acknowledgement helps shed light on Native history while also showing respect to the Native ancestors.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda and Consent Agenda.

Ms. Rogers pulled item 12(a), Resolution No. 5009, from the Consent Agenda.

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

City Clerk Snider read the Consent Agenda, as Amended, into the record.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of March 28, 2022

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

SPECIAL ORDERS

a) The Fairbanks City Council heard interested citizens concerned with the following Liquor License Applications for Renewal:

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
104	Red Lantern Steak & Spirits	Beverage Dispensary	Westmark Hotels, Inc.	813 Noble Street
542	Geraldo's Restaurant	Beverage Dispensary	Garlic Lovers, LLC	701 College Road
4247	Brewsters	Beverage Dispensary	Restaurant Concepts, LLC	3578 Airport Way

Ms. Rogers, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the Liquor License Applications for Renewal.

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

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

YEAS: Marney, Clark, Therrien, Gibson, Rogers, Cleworth

NAYS: None

Mayor Matherly declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- b) The Fairbanks City Council heard interested citizens concerned with the following Liquor License Application for Transfer of Ownership and Location:

Type/License: Package Store, License #3282

DBA: No DBA

Applicant: Holiday Alaska, LLC

Location: No Premises

From Owner: Sam's West, Inc.

From DBA: Sam's Club #6603

From Location: 48 College Road, Fairbanks

Ms. Rogers, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the Liquor License Application for Transfer of Ownership and Location.

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

Mr. Gibson asked about the process for the transfer since no location had been listed on the transfer. Clerk Snider explained that the liquor license would have to come back before the City Council prior to becoming operational at a new location.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO WAIVE PROTEST ON THE LICENSE APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP AND LOCATION AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Rogers, Therrien, Clark, Cleworth, Marney, Gibson

NAYS: None

Mayor Matherly declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- c) The Fairbanks City Council heard interested citizens concerned with the following Liquor License Application for Transfer of Controlling Interest and Restaurant Designation Permit:

Type/License: Beverage Dispensary, License #4395

DBA: The Banks Alehouse

Applicant: Goethe, LLC

Location: 1243 Old Steese Highway, Fairbanks

From Owner: Goethe, LLC (controlling interest only)

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the Liquor License Application for Transfer of Controlling Interest and Restaurant Designation Permit.

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

Ms. Rogers asked about any previous issues with the applicant; Clerk Snider replied that she recalled no issues.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO WAIVE PROTEST ON THE LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER OF CONTROLLING INTEREST AND RESTAURANT DESIGNATION PERMIT AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Gibson, Cleworth, Marney, Clark, Therrien, Rogers

NAYS: None

Mayor Matherly declared the MOTION CARRIED.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT

Mayor Matherly noted how heavily he relies on City department heads, and he welcomed Chief Raygor. He congratulated the Fairbanks Ice Dogs on securing the Club 49 Cup. He noted that there is still a lot of snow and ice on the roads and in the drains; he thanked Public Works for the job they do and asked the public to be patient. **Mayor Matherly** spoke to the Tetlin mine and the hauling of ore, noting that he had done a lot of research on the topic and had some traffic concerns. He encouraged others to attend public meetings on the topic, adding that he will be meeting with other organizations; he again expressed his concern about the traffic and the impact it will have on tourism and highway traveling. He wished everyone a happy Easter, noting the public service that would be held at the bridge downtown on Sunday at 7:00 a.m. **Mayor Matherly** thanked those present during the Work Session, noting that over 9,000 parking spaces are available in the downtown area, even though some of them belong to private businesses. He went on to speak to the concerns regarding the street fair downtown, noting that not everyone can be pleased all the time, but he understood Mr. Staton's concerns. He encouraged Mr. Staton to work with the DTA, as they were the organization putting on that event. He also noted that Mr. Staton's complaint regarding booth placement is the only complaint that he has heard. **Mayor Matherly** spoke to the land acknowledgement testimony, noting that former Council Member Kun had read it at every meeting; he noted that he recently attended a Native leadership meeting regarding public safety.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Gibson congratulated Chief Raygor and stated he is excited to see what the Chief would bring to the Fire Department.

Mr. Marney thanked Chief Raygor for accepting the position. He thanked all those who testified regarding failed Resolution No. 4981, adding that he had a great deal of respect for the Native people of Alaska and their culture. He noted that the comments gave him new perspectives to consider. He went on to express his hope that the DTA, Parking Authority, and Festival Fairbanks could better communicate and work together.

Mr. Clark thanked those who testified and clarified that the message intended in his response to the letter from the Native leadership was that by formally acknowledging one population within the City, others are effectively excluded. He stated that his belief does not diminish the respect he holds for the Native population and culture. He addressed the water on roadways, noting that he nearly splashed a pedestrian unintentionally; he asked drivers to be courteous and aware.

Ms. Therrien thanked everyone for their testimony, noting that it was unfortunate that the testimony had come too late for the consideration of the land acknowledgement. She thanked Mr. Costello for his comments regarding the FNSB tax exemption and shared that a City ordinance was still in the works. **Ms. Therrien** added that the DTA and Mr. Staton need to work together to find a solution, adding that moving the stands seemed like a simple fix to the issues presented.

Ms. Rogers thanked Chief Raygor and recognized his promotion. She added that the testimony was very positive and respectful and thanked those who took the time to speak. She spoke to the idea of active and respectful listening, adding that she had hope for a brighter and more connected community moving forward.

Mr. Cleworth spoke to Mr. Staton's comments and to the issue of vendors being set up on the sidewalk; he added that having the event on Sunday is also troublesome. He recognized Chief Raygor in his new appointment. **Mr. Cleworth** spoke to the testimony regarding the land acknowledgement, expressing concern that the relationship between the City and the Native community has not always been amicable. He noted that it should concern everyone to hear such comments but noted some of the growth and improvements over the years. He added that he did not feel that it was fair to consider the vote regarding the reading of a land acknowledgement as a lack of respect or appreciation for the Native population and culture. **Mr. Cleworth** added that he would still be in favor of adding the land acknowledgement as a permanent historical record to be displayed in City Council Chambers, clarifying that he felt the reading of a document as normal part of business devalues the meaning of the statement over time.

Ms. Therrien added to her previous comments by congratulating Chief Raygor and wishing everyone a happy Easter.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Ordinance No. 6202 – An Ordinance Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Funds from the United States Department of Transportation for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program. Introduced by Mayor Matherly. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6202.

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

Mr. Clark asked if this was a first-time application or a re-application. **Mayor Matherly** confirmed that it was the first time.

Ms. Therrien shared a concern that the grant had a matching fund requirement when the Council had not yet created its prioritized list of projects.

Ms. Rogers acknowledged Ms. Therrien's concern but felt that the grant would address an important and long-needed project.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6202 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Marney, Therrien, Rogers, Gibson
NAYS: Clark
Mayor Matherly declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6202 ADOPTED.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Resolution No. 5009 – A Resolution Expressing Gratitude to Senator Lisa Murkowski for Helping Secure Funding for the Demolition of the Polaris Building. Introduced by Council Member Therrien.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Rogers**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5009.

Ms. Rogers asked to co-sponsor the resolution and suggested that all Council members do the same. **Mayor Matherly** asked for a show of hands from others who would like to be added as sponsors; Mr. Marney, Mr. Cleworth, and Mr. Gibson indicated that they wished to be added.

Mr. Marney asked if there had been participation by any other legislative members in securing the funds. **Mayor Matherly** stated that there was other involvement, but Sen. Murkowski had done most of the heavy lifting. **Ms. Rogers** confirmed that the discussions have always revolved around Sen. Murkowski and her involvement.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5009 by adding the language “and for the work of the Polaris Working Group” at the end of the document.

Mr. Cleworth stated that the Polaris Working Group has spent a great deal of time on the project and had worked with Sen. Murkowski to make it a priority; he added that the group should also be recognized for its efforts.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 5009 BY ADDING THE LANGUAGE “AND FOR THE WORK OF THE POLARIS WORKING GROUP” AT THE END OF THE DOCUMENT AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Therrien, Rogers, Cleworth, Marney, Gibson
NAYS: Clark
Mayor Matherly declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Clark explained that he appreciated Ms. Therrien’s intent behind the resolution but stated that he does not support the overall cost of the infrastructure bill where the funds originated.

Mr. Cleworth acknowledged Mr. Clark’s concern over the cost of the infrastructure bill, especially given that there was no associated funding source. He stated, however, that the City might as well get a small portion of the funds as everyone will be paying for the bill in one way or another.

Ms. Therrien asked for the Council's support of the resolution.

Mayor Matherly shared his appreciation for the work done to obtain the funds for the Polaris Building, adding that he could not see a future where the City would ever have enough funds to demolish the building on its own. He added that each year the cost and risk of the project escalates.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5009, AS AMENDED, AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Gibson, Rogers, Therrien, Marney, Cleworth

NAYS: Clark

Mayor Matherly declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5009, as Amended, APPROVED.

- b) Ordinance No. 6203 – An Ordinance Authorizing the Lease of Golden Heart Plaza to Festival Fairbanks. Introduced by Mayor Matherly.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

- a) Chena Riverfront Commission Meeting Minutes of February 23, 2022

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

With no objection from the Council, Members' Comments and Committee Reports were combined.

Mr. Clark stated he had no comments.

Mr. Marney spoke to the Tetlin mining project and to his concern due to the 188 school bus stops on the route from Tetlin to Fairbanks. He spoke to the Clerk's quarterly report regarding the FNSB election ordinance and asked that the Council begin discussing the potential effects it may have on the City elections.

Mr. Gibson stated he had no comments.

Mr. Cleworth echoed Mr. Marney's concern about the FNSB election ordinance being introduced, adding that he had previously believed that it was not legally possible to combine state and local elections on the same day. He added that it would be good to discuss the issue with the Clerk at a Finance Committee meeting, possibly obtaining the Borough Clerk's opinion as well. He noted that it would be good to have a resolution or opinion to present to the FNSB Assembly. **Mr. Cleworth** shared that he had visited Galveston, Texas recently and noted that Fairbanks sidewalks are in better shape and are more ADA compliant than in Galveston; he noted also that Galveston is a wealthier community. He stated that it had been a good experience to tour other communities

and see how differently things are done. He requested that the Administration provide the number of grievances that have been filed at the City and how they impact City departments.

Ms. Rogers thanked the Clerk for her quarterly report, noting that she appreciates receiving her insight.

Ms. Therrien spoke to the changes made to the AML annual conference, which was also noted in the City Clerk's report; she stated she had been working with CFO Bell in regard to budget meetings in light of the change. She went on to share that the State budget had been passed by the House and was currently with the Senate and that she did not feel there would be much more legislation passed at this point in the legislative session.

Mayor Matherly shared that Public Works Director Jeff Jacobson had recently shown him the plaques that were created in memory of Mr. Mike Meeks. Chief of Staff Sanders added that the plaques would be mounted along with some of Mr. Meeks' photography. **Mayor Matherly** added that there would be a memorial for Mr. Meeks on June 18, and more information would follow.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

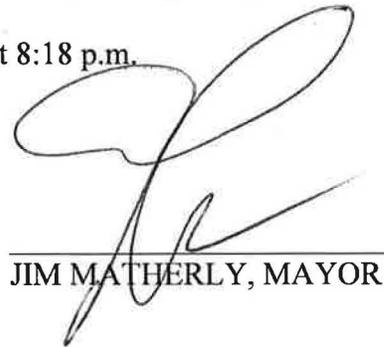
City Clerk Snider stated that the City Council is required to meet twice per month per the City Charter and pointed out that that the change in the AML conference dates may present a conflict with the meeting schedule. She added that the budget adoption deadline is also noted in the City Charter as December 15. She stated that starting the budget process earlier would help, but it may not solve the meeting issue entirely.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Clark, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

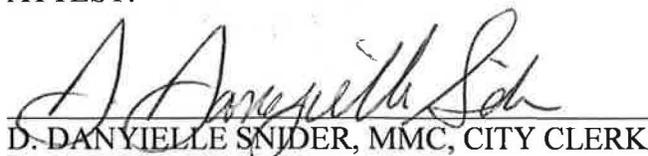
Mayor Matherly called for objection and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

Mayor Matherly declared the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.



JIM MATHERLY, MAYOR

ATTEST:



D. DANYIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: RR