



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, JULY 11, 2022  
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, following a 5:15 p.m. Work Session to discuss the Room Rental Tax Rate and Distribution, 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  
   D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk  
   Paul Ewers, City Attorney  
   Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff  
   Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely)  
   Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director  
   Ron Dupee, Police Chief (remotely)  
   Rick Sweet, Deputy Police Chief  
   Scott Raygor, Fire Chief  
   Clem Clooten, Building Official (remotely)  
   Jeff Jacobson, Public Works Director  
   Brenda McFarlane, Crisis Now Coordinator

**INVOCATION**

The Invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

**FLAG SALUTATION**

At the request of **Mayor Matherly**, **Mr. Gibson** lead the Flag Salutation.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

Barbara Haney, North Pole – B. Haney spoke against Resolution No. 5021, adding that the Kinross Corporation spent \$435B dollars in the 2020-2021 fiscal year in the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), effectively making up one-third of the Borough's overall revenue. She stated that the traffic increase within City limits would be approximately 1%, causing congestion similar to

summertime road construction. She stated that the loss of revenue would have a much more detrimental impact on the City, and she urged the Council to not approve the resolution.

Brenna Schaake, Kinross Fort Knox – B. Schaake spoke against Resolution No. 5021, adding that the resolution was premature considering the early stages of the project. She noted that the Manh Choh project would keep the underutilized Fort Knox Mill in operation and secure over 2,100 direct and indirect jobs. She shared that the company had been engaged in conversations with school districts and communities along the proposed route, including Tetlin and Tok where they anticipated an increase in infrastructure and community services. B. Schaake stated that there has been a great deal of support for the project and referenced a letter in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner. She concluded by pointing out that the project was not anticipated to begin until mid-2024 and asked that the Council be part of the solution by opposing Resolution No. 5021.

Gary Wilken, Safe Alaskan Highways – G. Wilken spoke in favor of Resolution No. 5021 and expressed concerns that the Kinross Corporation was attempting to turn the Alaskan Highway System into an industrial haul road. He clarified that Safe Alaskan Highways is not against the mining industry, but they prioritize the safety of commuters and children using bus stops. He gave information that indicated there would be a haul truck approximately every 5 miles, passing approximately every seven and one-half minutes. He added that the current Fort Knox mine life has been stated to be robust through 2030 and did not require the additional ore to stay productive.

Steve Hovenden, Fairbanks – S. Hovenden spoke in favor of Resolution No. 5021, sharing his concerns that Kinross had indicated they plan to utilize road, rail, and river in their transportation of ore from multiple mines in the interior. He added that the Manh Choh mine is projected to have an incredibly rich ore base and the rate of transportation is very likely to increase dramatically above and beyond the original estimations.

Mary Farrell, Fairbanks – M. Farrell spoke in favor of Resolution No. 5021 as a member of Safe Alaskan Highways. She shared that the current transportation project would be the largest hauling project to use public roads in the world, adding that it would use over 250 miles of public highways and City streets. She noted that the next largest project is in Nevada where 60 miles of public roads were used for hauling; she noted that that project lacked the added dangers that come with traffic signals, commuters, and bus stops. M. Farrell shared her concern that citizens who use the public road system and the infrastructure would suffer while a foreign corporation could profit. She stated that while Kinross had the legal ability to do the project, it was an unsafe and high-risk plan.

Barbara Schuhmann, Fairbanks – B. Schuhmann spoke in favor of Resolution No. 5021 on behalf of the Safe Alaskan Highways group, asking that the City require Kinross to provide a complete, detailed transportation and safety plan. She shared concern for the amount of ore being transported, the length of the projected project, and the impact on the already poor air quality in the area.

Mike Prax, North Pole – M. Prax spoke against Resolution No. 5021, noting that while there are definite safety concerns to be addressed, this resolution was being presented before all the information was available for consideration.. He added that the company has the legal ability to use the roads to transport ore, much like the giant tour busses that take up much of the highway. He felt that deciding against a specific industry, while allowing other industries to do much of the same activity, was sending a very clear message against the project rather than a concern for safety.

John Miscovich, Fox – J. Miscovich spoke against Resolution No. 5021, adding that City Hall is located in an old schoolhouse that had been a result of the mining industry. He added that he had been an employee of Kinross and has benefited from the resource industry his entire life. He spoke to the high safety standards that Kinross expects of its employees. He went on to state that neither the City nor the State has the right to pick and choose which projects happen within the economy, adding that Kinross was helping to create and maintain a healthy mining industry while contributing over \$2MM in the community.

Andy Warwick, Fairbanks – A. Warwick spoke against Resolution No. 5021, adding that he trusted the Department of Transportation (DOT) to address any safety issues; he recognized that the increased traffic would likely inconvenience many. He spoke to the significant decrease in the student population, noting the school district's recent decision to close two schools within the Borough. He noted that Fort Knox is the largest Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA) customer, the second largest property taxpayer, and one of the largest employers in the area. He spoke to the economic impact those jobs and families have on the community.

Victor Buberger, Fairbanks – V. Buberger spoke to the pothole issues around Fairbanks, noting the many roads in terrible condition. He recognized the hard work put in by the Public Works Department and their director who is trying to keep up with the issues and suggested the City put more money towards the roads rather than the Polaris Building.

Jomo Stewart, Fairbanks – J. Stewart explained that his comments were his own and were in no way representative of the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation (FEDC), of which he serves as President and CEO. He shared that the Manh Choh Mine project would create a paradigm shift for the community, making Fairbanks a center of mining for the northern tier by being the largest processor of minerals. He spoke to the past twenty-year decline in population and growth, adding that the building up of the military and now the increase of resource processing provided great growth opportunity. He shared his own concerns for safety on the highway; he shared that he had spoken with the Alaska Railroad about the possibility of a bridge that could transport ore from Delta Junction in the future. He asked that the Council postpone its vote on the resolution until more information can be gathered.

J. Jacobson, North Pole – J. Jacobson spoke in favor of Resolution No. 5021, sharing that while the highways allow for the mass transport of ore, it would create too many risks to the drivers who use those roads every day. He went on to explain that he supports Kinross and other mining developments, adding that he does not have safety concerns regarding the professional truck drivers. He clarified that it is the other drivers and their impatience that he worries will cause issues when dealing with delays.

Clark Milne, Fairbanks – C. Milne spoke against Resolution No. 5021, stating that Kinross is a large and professional company that will not permit unsafe practices, even in the mass transport of ore. He added that the City Council's resolution is beyond its scope of responsibility, adding that the trucks are legally allowed to use the highways for transportation. He spoke to his experience with the DOT, adding that deterioration of the road is an unknown factor and is very unlikely.

John Ringstad, Fairbanks – J. Ringstad spoke against Resolution No. 5021 and spoke to the lack of authority the Council has on the issue. He added that the Council's negative opinion could

negatively impact the entire relationship between the City and Kinross. He went on to speak to the opportunities that Kinross provides for young people to remain in the area, raise their families and spend money in the community. He spoke to the traffic issues, which he stated only truly exist as the trucks enter town where there is a well-developed truck route for the express purpose of what Kinross wants to do.

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

Lisa Herbert, Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce – L. Herbert stated that the Chamber had a long history of advocacy for responsible development, investment, and job creation; she added that her organization has been involved in meetings and discussions regarding the Kinross Manh Choh mine project. She referenced the current DOT action plan that is in progress, adding that action on Resolution No. 5021 is premature. She asked that the City Council do its due diligence to be engaged and educated prior to making a decision.

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

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

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

**Mr. Clark** pulled item 12(a), Resolution No. 5021, 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 May 23, 2022

PASSED and 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
5436	Hoarfrost Distilling	Distillery	Hoarfrost Distilling, LLC	3501 Lathrop Street, Unit F
2565	El Dorado Bar and Grill	Beverage Dispensary	El Dorado Bar and Grill, Inc.	530 Third Avenue

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

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

**Ms. Rogers** noted that the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) call list was shorter than usual.

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

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

NAYS: None

**Mayor Matherly** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

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

**Mayor Matherly** thanked everyone who provided testimony and spoke to the importance of having open dialogue between the public and the Council. He went on to speak to the many wildfires in the surrounding areas and how the smoke had settled in the Fairbanks area. He thanked all the firefighters working diligently to protect homes and put out fires, adding his hope for rain in the forecast. **Mayor Matherly** went on to thank the Public Works Director and his department for their hard work in repairing roads, and he asked that the public please notify the City when they experience potholes; he stated that they can only address issues that are known.

a) Special Report: Fairbanks Fire Chief Scott Raygor

Chief Raygor started by explaining the current medic situation and the accomplishments of the department during his first 90 days as Fire Chief. He stated that 23% of the currently employed medics had been hired by him, and he spoke to how current staff is being used. Chief Raygor also reported on the department's current vacant positions. He stated that the City's share of Supplemental Emergency Medical Transport (SEMT) funds had come in much higher than what had been budgeted and shared his hope that they may be able to consider a Medic 3.

**Mr. Marney** asked for clarification on the reimbursement amounts. Chief Raygor stated that the per call rate should be consistent, but the COVID portion would end. Chief of Staff Mike Sanders provided a breakdown of the SEMT funds, stating that the COVID funds had made up a considerably small portion of the overall reimbursement.

**Mr. Marney** asked about the current morale of the department. Chief Raygor stated that there had not been any grievances filed since he was appointed and that he felt that morale had been improving. He went on to provide information on the department's fire prevention program, which included building inspections, fire investigations, plan review and a community risk reduction program. He added that fire prevention also deals with occupancy issues and complaints.

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Mr. Gibson** stated he would reserve his comments for later in the meeting.

**Mr. Marney** thanked the public for their testimony, adding his appreciation for being able to hear multiple sides of a difficult issue.

**Mr. Clark** stated he had no comments.



**Ms. Therrien** stated she would reserve her comments for later in the meeting.

**Ms. Rogers** thanked everyone for their respectful testimony on both sides of the Manh Choh issue. She added that she did not believe the Council had fully examined the issue and that more time may be needed before taking a vote.

**Mr. Cleworth** agreed with Ms. Rogers comments, adding that both sides have very strong feelings on the issue. He thanked everyone for coming forward and bringing their comments to the Council.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a) Ordinance No. 6211 – An Ordinance Amending the Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks Firefighters Union IAFF Local 1324 (FFU) to Change the Daily Staffing Rules, Administrative Officer Schedule, and Promotions and Probationary Periods. Introduced by Mayor Matherly. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

**Mr. Marney**, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6211.

**Mayor Matherly** called for testimony.

Victor Buberger, Fairbanks – V. Buberger asked that the Council consider adding amendments to the Fairbanks Firefighters Union (FFU) bargaining agreement to allow for volunteer firefighters.

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

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked COS Sanders and Fire Chief Raygor for their timely response on the overtime and education issues, reiterating that those items should have been addressed during labor negotiations. He added that the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) had been rushed and still contained issues that may need to be addressed in the future. **Mr. Cleworth** expressed agreement with V. Buberger that the City and its citizens would benefit from allowing volunteers at the Fairbanks Fire Department (FFD).

**Mayor Matherly** also expressed his gratitude for COS Sanders and his work on this project immediately after taking his new position. He added that there has been a concentrated effort to make negotiations more friendly, and he appreciated everyone's part in them.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6211 AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

**Mayor Matherly** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6211 ADOPTED.

- b) Ordinance No. 6212 – An Ordinance Amending FGC Section 22-9 by Adding Provisions for Candidate Biographical Information and Non-Partisan Position Statement. Introduced by Council Member Cleworth. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

**Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6212.

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

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked the City Clerk Snider for drafting the ordinance, adding that it had been a topic of discussion for a long time. He added his hope that candidates would participate and it would be successful.

Mayor Matherly and all other members of the Council agreed to co-sponsor the ordinance.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6212 AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

**Mayor Matherly** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6212 ADOPTED.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Resolution No. 5021 – A Resolution Expressing Opposition to the Ore Trucking Proposal for the Manh Choh Mine Project. Introduced by Council Member Therrien.

**Ms. Therrien**, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5021.

**Mr. Clark** thanked Ms. Therrien for bringing a very important issue to the Council and engaging the public. He added that he had originally believed they had most of the pertinent information on the topic, but after hearing testimony from the varied perspectives he now felt that the Council should allow for more time for consideration.

**Mr. Clark**, seconded by **Ms. Rogers**, moved to POSTPONE INDEFINITELY Resolution No. 5021.

**Ms. Therrien**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to AMEND the motion to postpone indefinitely by changing the postponement to the Regular City Council meeting on September 12, 2022.

**Mr. Cleworth** expressed his agreement that more time was needed and asked if there was a timeframe for when the DOT may have its action plan completed. He stated that it may be better to postpone indefinitely and bring the item forward as a new resolution after more discussion could be had and timelines could be established.

**Mayor Matherly** stated that he did not know the deadline for the DOT action plan but indicated that he would be in favor of multiple work sessions.

**Mr. Gibson** stated he felt that to postpone indefinitely was a better option, noting that, at this point he did not believe it was reasonable to guarantee a time when a decision could be made.

**Ms. Therrien** stated that the resolution could be postponed further at the September 12 meeting if there were still questions; she added that she would prefer to ensure the discussion continues by keeping the resolution alive.

**Mr. Marney** spoke in favor of the amendment.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND THE MOTION TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY BY CHANGING THE DATE OF POSTPONEMENT TO THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2022, AS FOLLOWS:

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

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO POSTPONE RESOLUTION NO. 5021 TO THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2022, AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Marney, Clark, Therrien, Rogers, Gibson  
NAYS: None.  
**Mayor Matherly** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

- a) Memorandum Regarding Notice of Offices and Manner of Declaring Candidacy

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

- b) Reappointment to the Fairbanks Diversity Council

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

**Mr. Gibson** thanked the public for their participation, adding that local government counts on the interaction of citizens to work properly.

**Mr. Marney** thanked the Fairbanks community for refraining from Fourth of July fireworks given the current fire situation. He reminded drivers that neighborhood speed limits are often capped at 20 mph and to be mindful of the families living in those areas.



**Mr. Clark** thanked everyone for their participation, adding that the meeting had been very informative. He thanked Ms. Therrien for bringing the Manh Choh mine discussion to the floor.

**Ms. Therrien** thanked the citizens for their testimony regarding Resolution No. 5021, and she thanked the Council for postponing the discussion to September so that work sessions could be held. She gave a land acknowledgment and noted that the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO) was currently underway; she wished all the visitors and participants a wonderful week. **Ms. Therrien** noted the recommendation in the City Clerk's report to change the 2022 Council meeting schedule to accommodate for the AML conference dates, noting that she herself is required to attend as a member of the AML board.

**Ms. Therrien**, seconded by **Ms. Rogers**, moved to AMEND the 2022 City Council Meeting Schedule by changing December 5 and 12 to December 12 and 19.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated that he was unhappy with the AML's decision to move its conference to December, noting the disadvantage it put the Council in in regard to finalizing the next year's budget. He recognized the Clerk's involvement as part of the Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks (AAMC) Executive Board, adding that he would be in favor of the date changes.

**Ms. Rogers** pointed out that the report provided by CFO Bell indicated that the change in dates would not lessen the amount of time for the Council to review the budget as there would be additional meeting time in November. She added that the relationship between the City and AML was important to maintain.

**Mayor Matherly** called for objection to the motion to AMEND the 2022 City Council Meeting Schedule, and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

**Ms. Therrien** reported that the AML Board would be meeting soon to discuss policy decisions.

**Ms. Rogers** thanked Mr. Marney for recognizing the lack of fireworks on the Fourth of July, adding that she had attended the Independence Day parade and visited Pioneer Park where there were many great family activities. She listed the various meetings she had attended recently, recognizing Crisis Now Coordinator Brenda McFarlane for her leadership. She thanked the FPD for providing the Arbinger training and expressed hope that it will continue to be offered regularly.

COS Sanders stated that the Arbinger training would be happening at least two more times in 2022, along with a second-level leadership course for those who had taken the first session.

**Mr. Cleworth** shared his desire that the Council hold multiple work sessions regarding the ore hauling issue and recommended that each work session be limited to one outside party at a time: Kinross, DOT, and Alaskans for Safer Highways; he indicated that would allow for a full discussion. He went on to speak of the mineral exploration happening in the surrounding areas, adding that the Fairbanks area was founded on mining. He noted that mining is one of the few industries that creates wealth that directly impacts the local economy. **Mr. Cleworth** again thanked the City Clerk for writing the ordinance regarding the candidate pamphlet as well as the revenue detail she provides in the quarterly report. He expressed his concern over the consistent decline in

citation revenue, noting that as the FPD brings up staffing levels, there should be a goal to bring revenue up to previous standards.

**Mayor Matherly** stated that he would contact the interested parties to schedule the Manh Choh work session as soon as possible.

**CITY CLERK'S REPORT**

City Clerk Snider shared that the candidate filing period would open on Friday, July 15, 2022.

**Mr. Clark**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ENTER Executive Session to discuss AFL-CIO 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) AFL-CIO Labor Negotiation Strategy

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

**Mayor Matherly** declared the meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.



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JIM MATHERLY, MAYOR

ATTEST:



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D. DANYIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: RR