



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, NOVEMBER 14, 2022
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date, following Work Sessions at 5:15 p.m. and 5:50 p.m. to hear annual reports from the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation (FEDC) and Explore Fairbanks, respectively, 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 David Pruhs presiding and with the following Council Members in attendance:

Council Members Present: Jerry Cleworth, Seat A
June Rogers, Seat B
Sue Sprinkle, Seat C
Crystal Tidwell, Seat D
Lonny Marney, Seat E
John Ringstad, 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
Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director (remotely)
Rick Sweet, Deputy Police Chief
Scott Raygor, Fire Chief
Andrew Coccaro, Assistant Fire Chief
Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely)

INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

FLAG SALUTATION

At the request of Mayor Pruhs, Ms. Sprinkle lead the Flag Salutation.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Scott McCrea, Explore Fairhanks – S. McCrea spoke against Ordinance No. 6223, stating that while he recognized the need to increase the amount of funding for the Golden Heart Plaza and the Discretionary Grant, he felt that the expense should be shared by the City. He went on to explain that Explore Fairbanks had reduced its estimated room rental tax income by \$70,000 in its 2023 budget and asked that the City account for the remaining \$30,000.

Darlene Supplee, Fairbanks – D. Supplee spoke in favor of Resolution No. 5034, adding that the planned dining room expansion would be the second phase of the Senior Center renovation plan.

She spoke to the benefits of having the expanded space and to how it would allow the Center to keep up with the increasing demand on their services. She spoke to the bill proposed by Senator Murkowski that would provide 2.5 million dollars to expand the office and parking spaces, which would complete the third and final phase of crucial renovations. D. Supplee spoke to the Center's partnership with City of Fairbanks and stated that it is an honor to provide essential services to the seniors in the community.

Victor Buberger, Fairbanks – V. Buberger congratulated Mayor Pruhs and wished him the best as he gave direction and guidance to the City.

Sam Kirstein, Fairbanks – S. Kirstein spoke in favor of Ordinance No. 6223, noting that there are currently 29 applications, from primarily volunteer groups, for the Discretionary Fund Grant and only \$270,000 in award funds. She spoke to the success of Explore Fairbanks in its efforts to bring tourists to Fairbanks but stated that there are simply not enough funds left for the small organizations that put on events for tourists and the community. She noted there are some organizations that would shut down if they did not receive funding from the Discretionary Grant.

Ms. Rogers asked S. Kirstein if she was aware that many of the organizations can obtain other funding based upon their approval for Discretionary Grant funds. S. Kirstein said that she was aware that the seal of approval was helpful but noted that it did not do much else to help keep organizations alive.

Mayor Pruhs thanked S. Kirstein and D. Supplee for their service to the City of Fairbanks and expressed his support of their projects. He shared that he had met with the City lobbyist and planned to voice his support in Anchorage as well.

David van den Berg, Fairbanks Downtown Association (DTA) – D. van den Berg shared that the DTA considers itself to be an economic development organization but clarified that it does not receive funding from the City. He stated that the DTA would benefit from having a City Council person assigned to represent the City at its meetings. He expressed a desire to have more involvement with the City Council in regard to the development of the downtown area. He referenced the Fairbanks Diversity Council's proposed action plan, adding that the DTA would like to see something similar in relation to how the City plans to address issues in the downtown area, such as snow removal. D. van den Berg spoke to the DTA's continued support of the Council's plans regarding housing issues, adding that the DTA also supports Resolution No. 5035. He shared that the DTA had applied for Discretionary funds this year.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

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

Ms. Sprinkle pulled item 12(b), Resolution No. 5035, from the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Cleworth pulled items 11(b), Ordinance No. 6221, 12(c), Resolution No. 5036, and 12(d), Resolution No. 5037, from the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Ringstad expressed a desire to address each item on the Consent Agenda but did not pull any items from it.

Ms. Rogers pulled item 12(e), Ordinance No. 6223, from the Consent Agenda.

Mayor Pruhs 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 October 24, 2022

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT

Mayor Pruhs shared that the Fairbanks Diversity Council (FDC) had met the previous week, adding that it was the first meeting in four months where the body had a quorum. He noted that the Fairbanks General Code (FGC) allows for him to serve as Chair of the FDC or to appoint a member to fill that role; he reported that he has elected to keep the current Chair, Dorothy Shockley, in place. He stated that a new FDC Vice Chair had been elected at the meeting, and the FDC seems to be comprised of very positive and intelligent individuals; he expressed his intention to attend each FDC meeting. **Mayor Pruhs** spoke about his first few weeks in office, adding that he was working very hard and enjoying it a great deal. He expressed his desire to be intentional when reading documents placed before him, and he mentioned that one of his goals is to ride along with the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) every two weeks. He encouraged Council members to participate in a ride-along if they have not, adding that it is very helpful in building relationships with the City staff. **Mayor Pruhs** shared about his experience touring the Fairbanks Fire Department (FFD) facilities and stated he would be requesting some funding for a new building for Fire Station 3 in the 2023 Capital budget.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Cleworth stated he had no comments.

Ms. Rogers thanked Mayor Pruhs for his attendance at the FDC meeting, adding that it had been very well-received by members. She shared that she had been participating in oral boards for hiring public safety employees and encouraged other Council members to consider doing the same; she added that it has helped her in building relationships with the FPD administration and staff.

Ms. Sprinkle thanked S. McCrea and J. Stewart for their presentations in the work sessions.

Ms. Tidwell thanked the FEDC and Explore Fairbanks for participating in the work sessions, noting the impact the organizations have on the success of the community.

Mr. Marney thanked S. McCrea for his willingness to work together on the Discretionary Grant funding, noting that his open-mindedness was greatly appreciated.

Mr. Ringstad stated he had no comments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Ordinance No. 6222 – An Ordinance Amending the Public Safety Employees Association/City of Fairbanks Collective Bargaining Agreement to Address Critical Staffing Levels at the Fairbanks Emergency Communications Center. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6222.

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

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6222 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Marney, Ringstad, Sprinkle, Rogers, Tidwell

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6222 ADOPTED.

- b) Ordinance No. 6221 – An Ordinance Amending the Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks Firefighters Union IAFF Local 1324 (FFU) to Change the Staffing Levels and Amending the 2022 Operating Budget. Introduced by former Mayor Matherly. First Reading was POSTPONED from the Regular Meeting of October 10, 2022.

Mayor Pruhs called for a motion to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6221, and, hearing none, declared that Ordinance No. 6221 FAILED TO ADVANCE.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Resolution No. 5034 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Participate in the FFY2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

PASSED and APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

- b) Resolution No. 5035 – A Resolution Authorizing the Acquisition of Real Property Located at 109 5th Avenue. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5035.

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Mr. Cleworth**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5035 by striking, “so the property could be used to support the Cemetery” from the third Whereas.

Mr. Cleworth asked whether Ms. Sprinkle would prefer that the property be available for sale, and **Ms. Sprinkle** replied affirmatively. She stated that the Cemetery has a great deal of space around it for parking and picnic tables, and she would not want the property to be removed from City tax rolls.

Mr. Ringstad spoke in favor of taking the property acquisition step-by-step, adding that acquiring the property was first. He indicated that discussion on how to proceed further should occur when there was more information available.

Mr. Marney expressed concern that the cost of abatement and restoration of the property could easily exceed the property value. **Ms. Sprinkle** agreed with Mr. Marney but stated that she would like to have that information prior to making a final decision.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 5035 BY STRIKING, “SO THE PROPERTY COULD BE USED TO SUPPORT THE CEMETERY” FROM THE THIRD WHEREAS AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Ringstad, Tidwell, Rogers, Sprinkle
NAYS: Marney
Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5035, AS AMENDED, AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Sprinkle, Rogers, Cleworth, Marney, Ringstad, Tidwell
NAYS: None
Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5035, as Amended, APPROVED.

- c) Resolution No. 5036 – A Resolution Stating the City of Fairbanks Legislative and Capital Priorities for 2023. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Mr. Cleworth**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5036.

Mr. Cleworth explained that he pulled the resolution from the Consent Agenda because the Council had not had time for discussion on the topics; he stated that ordinarily the Council has time for such discussion at a Finance Committee meeting prior to the introduction of a resolution. He asked that the Council consider postponement so that the resolution could be discussed at the next Finance Committee meeting or at a special meeting, if necessary.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to POSTPONE Resolution No. 5036 to the Regular City Council Meeting of November 28, 2022.

Ms. Sprinkle asked for procedural clarification regarding postponement. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that the resolution would still be available for discussion, and the vote would occur at a later date. He went on to state that he had introduced the resolution in order to have a working document to discuss and spoke in support of Mr. Cleworth's motion to postpone.

Mr. Marney expressed interest in reaching out to surrounding municipalities for their support and cooperation.

Mr. Cleworth stated that he felt it would be appropriate to have another meeting with a version of the resolution available to discuss with the Interior Delegation. He noted that if the Council agreed on items, approving them would be a formality; he stated that that way, amendments could still be made.

Mr. Ringstad added that while it would be nice to have the document finalized prior to meeting with the Interior Delegation, he felt there was adequate time to present a formal document prior to the start of the Legislative session. He added that he would support postponement.

Ms. Rogers spoke in favor of postponing, adding her desire to work with other municipalities going forward.

Mayor Pruhs shared that he would take the Council's approved priorities to the City of North Pole and Borough mayors for further discussion and collaboration.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO POSTPONE RESOLUTION NO. 5036 TO THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF NOVEMBER 28, 2022 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Sprinkle, Cleworth, Ringstad, Marney, Tidwell, Rogers

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- d) Resolution No. 5037 – A Resolution Adopting a City of Fairbanks Diversity Action Plan. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

Mr. Ringstad, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5037.

Mr. Cleworth noted that the adoption of the original Diversity Action Plan (DAP) had taken four months to complete, and he felt that there should be more discussion for a better understanding of the FDC's intentions.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to POSTPONE Resolution No. 5037 to the Regular City Council Meeting of January 9, 2023, so that a work session could be held with the Fairbanks Diversity Council.

Clerk's Note: The original motion to postpone did not specify a date. Later in the meeting the error was noted, and it was agreed that the resolution would be postponed to January 9, 2023.

Mr. Ringstad spoke in favor of the motion to postpone. **Mr. Marney** stated that he would also like to have a discussion with the FDC. **Mayor Pruhs** spoke in favor of postponing, adding that he felt it could result in a stronger working relationship between the City Council and the FDC.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO POSTPONE RESOLUTION NO. 5037 TO THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF JANUARY 9, 2023, SO THAT A WORK SESSION COULD BE HELD WITH THE FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Tidwell, Cleworth, Ringstad, Marney, Sprinkle, Rogers

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- e) Ordinance No. 6223 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Chapter 74, Article V, Room Rental Tax, to Change the Allocations to Golden Heart Plaza/Barnette’s Landing and Discretionary Grants. Introduced by Council Member Marney.

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Mr. Cleworth**, moved to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6223.

Ms. Rogers expressed a desire to hear more from Mr. Marney, recognizing the time and work he had put into drafting the ordinance. **Mr. Cleworth** asked for clarification of Ms. Rogers’ intent, noting that the advancement of the ordinance would allow for greater discussion and public input at the second reading. **Ms. Rogers** wondered if a work session could be held to discuss the topic. **Mr. Cleworth** noted that in normal procedure the advancement of the ordinance would automatically put it up for discussion at the next Finance Committee meeting.

Mr. Marney expressed his hope to see the ordinance advanced and adopted in a timely fashion so that the 2023 budget could be amended to effectuate the change to the Discretionary Grant.

Mr. Ringstad expressed concern that the Council does not discuss room rental tax revenue increases above and beyond budgetary proposals prior to the funds being disbursed to Explore Fairbanks.

Mayor Pruhs noted that it had been 19 years since the Discretionary Grant had been modified.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if the ordinance could be discussed at the Finance Committee meeting without taking a vote on it at that time. **Mr. Cleworth** clarified that the motion to advance the ordinance would promote it to a second reading at the next regular City Council meeting. He stated that before the next meeting it could be brought to the Finance Committee for discussion. He explained that the Council could vote after that on whether to pass, fail, or postpone the ordinance.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADVANCE ORDINANCE NO. 6223 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Rogers, Tidwell, Ringstad, Marney, Sprinkle, Cleworth

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- f) Ordinance No. 6224 – An Ordinance Amending FGC Sec. 22-25(f) Regarding Procedure for Determining the Winner of a Tie Vote in City Elections. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

- g) Ordinance No. 6225 – An Ordinance Amending the 2022 Operating and Capital Budgets for the Fourth Time. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

DISCUSSION ITEMS (INFORMATION AND REPORTS)

- a) Committee Reports

Ms. Rogers expressed her support of the Mayor appointing Council members to serve other organizations within the community. She added that she makes herself available for many different organizations, but they could benefit from having more interaction from the Council. She spoke to the difficulties of being homeless in Fairbanks this time year, noting that the warming shelter had been closed recently. She added that Angels in Motion, a group who provides meals in the downtown area, have come across many people experiencing hypothermia. She shared that it is important for everyone to be aware and call emergency services when they witness a person who may be at risk of freezing.

Mr. Marney shared that the Discretionary Fund Committee had met the previous week and discussed its policies and procedures. He added that they scheduled meetings for December 15 and 16.

Mr. Cleworth shared that he had attended the FAST-Planning Policy Board meeting and explained that he had received the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which he planned to share with the Council. He spoke to some of the projects that concerned the City, including a new project planned for 4th Avenue to be finished in 2028 and the 5th Avenue project that will begin in 2024. He noted that there were no projects slated for 2023, adding that it would put more pressure on the City's Capital Fund. He expressed hope that the City would hold two seats on the FAST Planning Policy Board soon, adding that he had concerns about the cost and delay associated with having to gain right-of-way for some of the projects, including the proposed sidewalk project on Minnic Street.

Ms. Rogers shared that there had been a lot of discussion within the community regarding Minnie Street and wondered if that information could be obtained for the Council's consideration.

- b) 2022-2023 Committee Assignments

Mayor Pruhs asked Mr. Marney if he was interested in remaining on the Discretionary Fund Committee and the Explore Fairbanks Board of Directors, **Mr. Marney** confirmed that he was.

Mayor Pruhs asked Ms. Rogers if she would like to remain on the committees she is currently serving on, and **Ms. Rogers** indicated that she would. She added that there are other committees she serves on that have not been noted. **Mayor Pruhs** asked for a list to be provided for his consideration.

Mayor Pruhs stated that has appointed Mr. Cleworth to the FAST Planning Policy Board and Mr. Ringstad to the Permanent Fund Review Board. He asked Ms. Sprinkle if she would consider serving on the Polaris Working Group, and she confirmed that she would.

Mayor Pruhs shared that, as Mayor, he holds a seat on the FEDC Board of Directors, and he asked if Ms. Tidwell would be willing to serve as his designee on that board with one condition: that she would help him work towards a project that would allow the expansion of companies that would use the Fairbanks International Airport for cargo landings. **Ms. Tidwell** stated that she would be interested but would like to confirm her availability to attend meetings.

Mayor Pruhs noted that Ms. Rogers currently serves on the Legislative Committee and asked Mr. Ringstad to fill the second seat. **Mayor Pruhs** asked Ms. Sprinkle if she would be willing to serve as his designee to the Chena Riverfront Commission, and she indicated that she would.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

- a) Memorandum Regarding Fire Department Clerk Promotion
ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA.
- b) Approval of the 2023 City Council Meeting Schedule
APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.
- c) Reappointment to the Permanent Fund Review Board
APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.
- d) Reappointments to the Chena Riverfront Commission
APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.
- e) Recommendation for Reappointment to the FNSB Planning Commission
APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.
- f) Discretionary Fund Committee Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2022
ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA.
- g) Clay Street Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes of September 7, 2022

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

- h) Clay Street Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes of October 5, 2022

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

- i) Chena Riverfront Commission Meeting Minutes of September 28, 2022

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Tidwell stated she had no comments.

Mr. Marney stated he had no comments.

Mr. Ringstad stated he had no comments.

Ms. Sprinkle she thanked the Mayor for appointing her to the Polaris Working Group, adding that she felt it would be a very rewarding experience.

Ms. Rogers shared her pleasure in being able to work with the members of the City Council. She stated that it is uplifting to be working with people dedicated to the work at hand.

Mr. Cleworth shared that he had learned of the Fairbanks North Star Borough's (FNSB) desire to withdraw from the Alaska Municipal League (AML), adding that in previous years the Borough's AML fees covered a portion of the City's costs to be a member. He asked about the current situation regarding the costs associated with the City's membership to the AML.

Mayor Pruhs stated that he would investigate the issue and provide information to the Council.

Mr. Cleworth continued his comments by speaking about various downtown task forces and their historical productivity. He stated that many of the groups he has been a part of spend more time meeting than making positive changes. He added that he has considered the necessity to form a group to discuss a 5-to-10-year plan for the City of Fairbanks to deal with the mental health issues that persist. He noted the FPD's frustrations with having to respond to repeat offenders, only to have them released immediately to offend again. **Mr. Cleworth** clarified that he was not sure a working group was the answer but added that something needed to be done and hopefully a discussion would result in some new ideas.

Ms. Rogers thanked Mr. Cleworth for his comments. She also encouraged drivers to be aware of pedestrians and speed limits, noting that it is everyone's responsibility to keep each other safe.

Mr. Ringstad, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to ENTER Executive Session to discuss Thompson v. City of Fairbanks Mediation Strategy and AFL-CIO Labor Negotiation Strategy.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

a) Thompson v. City of Fairbanks Mediation Strategy

Clerk's Note: Ms. Tidwell, having previously declared a conflict of interest, removed herself from the AFL-CIO Labor Negotiation Strategy Executive Session.

b) AFL-CIO Labor Negotiation Strategy

The City Council met in Executive Session to discuss Thompson v. City of Fairbanks Mediation Strategy and AFL-CIO Labor Negotiation Strategy. Direction was given to the City Attorney and the negotiating team, respectively, and no action was taken.

Mayor Pruhs asked the Council to readdress item 12(d), Resolution No. 5037.

City Clerk Snider explained that a date had not been specified in the motion to postpone the resolution. She suggested that the resolution be postponed to January 9, 2023, to allow time for a work session to be scheduled.

Mr. Cleworth, with concurrence of the second, agreed to specify the date of postponement as January 9, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

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

Mayor Pruhs declared the meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.



DAVID PRUHS, MAYOR

ATTEST:



D. DANIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: RR