



## CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Kasey Gillam, Director of Communications at Explore Fairbanks, 101 Dunkel Street – Ms. Gillam reported that in May, Explore Fairbanks had the privilege to host the North American Travel Journalists Association's annual conference and marketplace, which brought over 70 attendees to Fairbanks, most of whom were travel journalists and writers. She stated the participants had the opportunity to visit several local attractions and restaurants and the choice of various local activities to fill their afternoons. She stated that the week was capped off with a day trip to Denali National Park with everyone riding back to Fairbanks on the Alaska Railroad. She explained that travel writers help Explore Fairbanks by sharing their stories, as they write about these experiences in their wide-ranging and wide-reaching platforms. K. Gillam stated that generates significant exposure and interest in visiting Fairbanks and has been a way of influencing the tourism landscape for decades. She stated that some of the writers contribute to printed publications that may be weeks, months, or years out, but hundreds of social media posts and online articles from those who attended have already been shared. She stated that hosting the event has tremendous value to the local tourism industry and they look forward to seeing the return on their investment.

Clark Williams, Well Street – C. Williams stated that he had already spoken to the Mayor, but he has been dealing with multiple thefts and altercations regarding his own property and security equipment. He stated that people portraying themselves as UPS workers have been casing his house. He shared that he came to Fairbanks in 1976 and admitted that it was a rough town at the time. He stated he has seen the changes over the years and acknowledges that the core area has improved significantly; he stated, however, that there are a lot of concerning areas with graffiti and loitering groups of individuals. He commented that he is afraid to walk to the post office as he is now 70 years old and is not sure if he is perceived as an easy target. Addressing City Attorney Chard, C. Williams stated that his problem is not with the City Council or the police; rather, he has a problem with people getting away with all sorts of crime as part of the scourge of addiction. He shared a story of his neighbor's house being completely gutted by thieves. He stated he feels that we are slipping towards very dangerous times and asks the City Attorney to let the court system know. He stated he very much supports the police and does not want to see them defunded in any way. He expressed hope that the City is looking out for the late Sergeant Brandt's children.

**Ms. Rogers** asked C. Williams if he was under the impression that the Council was seeking to defund the police. C. Williams replied that he had heard something to that effect, at least the reduction of overtime. **Ms. Rogers** responded that there are a lot of complexities to the topic of police employment and that this particular Council has never even closely engaged in a discussion of defunding the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD). She stated that the Council is very supportive of the department. C. Williams stated he was happy to hear that. He stated that his input to the Mayor was primarily regarding a homeless center mostly for children, single moms, families, etc. Regarding the epidemic of addiction, he stated that the question is funding to combat those issues. He shared that the State of Alaska Mental Health Trust is the fourth largest landowner in the state, and much of their lands are being developed. He stated he hopes they can be a source of funding. **Ms. Rogers** asked C. Williams if he was aware of the Alaska Mental Health Trust assistance locally for some of the circumstances he has referenced and that there are services available for those seeking help, as well as agencies working to combat those issues. C. Williams

admitted that there is a lot he does not know. He stated that he is just sharing the symptoms and again stated that things are getting bad.

Victor Buberger, PO Box 58192, Fairbanks, AK 99711 – V. Buberger stated that he did not have many complaints and as far as he is concerned, the Mayor is doing a good job. He commented on the progress of the Polaris Building demolition and stated that it seems not much has been accomplished for the amount of time the project has been underway. He commented that it seems money is not made by doing a job, it is made by who you know and overruns. He asked when the cost overruns were going to start hitting or if they had already begun. **Mayor Pruhs** interjected to clarify that there have been no cost overruns nor requests for additional funds. He explained that the bid came in at \$1.25MM, and the overall project budget is \$13MM, meaning \$11.8MM will remain. He stated that bids for taking down the tower are due by the July 21, and the decision to award the contract will occur thereafter. He shared that on July 28 he will be signing a “Notice to Proceed” so demolition can begin. V. Buberger responded that he is glad to hear that and that he knows the Mayor is doing a good job – the smartest Mayor the City has had in years. **Mayor Pruhs** disagreed and stated that he believes Mr. Cleworth is the smartest City Mayor in years. V. Buberger added that he has a lot of respect for Mr. Cleworth as well. **Ms. Rogers** pointed out to Mayor Pruhs that procedurally, it is a time for the Council to only ask questions of speakers. **Mayor Pruhs** acknowledged that they were having a discussion and it was in fact on Mr. Buberger’s three minutes. V. Buberger continued by conveying a concern regarding several intersections in the area where overgrown bushes are obstructing the view around corners and suggested that FPD officers on patrol keep an eye out and report those things to Public Works.

Brynn Butler, City Housing Coordinator – B. Butler gave an update on the transient population and spoke to earlier comments regarding the assumption that those causing destruction and problems in the city are all homeless. She explained that homeless individuals often do not have a vehicle, which is typically needed to commit some of the crimes referenced. She shared that there are individuals who use illegal drugs and are not homeless and that her job is to advocate for the unhoused. She stated that the officer with the special assignment to patrol the Golden Heart Plaza (GHP) has been doing a great job, and his presence has been more effective than hers alone. B. Butler stated that a lot of the traffic she sees daily begins at Housing First, then to the Breadline, the plaza downtown, the cathedral, and then to the box stores. She stated she often receives notifications about locations where encampments have formed, and there is an effort to visit those individuals and provide them with information about the services available to them. She explained that some individuals do not want to be housed for various reasons, but overall, the problems of drug addiction and crime comes from more than those who are unhoused.

**Mayor Pruhs** called for any additional testimony, in-person and online, and hearing none, declared Citizens’ Comments closed.

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

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

**Mr. Cleworth** pulled item 12(b), Ordinance No. 6255, 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 OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of June 12, 2023

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

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

**Mayor Pruhs** shared that on Thursday at 1:00 p.m., he would be walking the GHP area with Officer Elzey and invited Council members to join him. He stated it would be an opportunity to ask Officer Elzey questions and have a better understanding of what is taking place in the downtown plaza area. He invited Building Official Clem Clooten to give a report on abatements.

Building Official Clooten provided the Council with a written report and gave a verbal status update on the following properties:

- 647 11th Avenue
- 649 11th Avenue
- 431 Gaffney Street
  - C. Clooten referenced the State taking responsibility for this property as part of a future road project. **Ms. Rogers** asked if there was a timeline for when the State expects to begin that project. C. Clooten and **Mayor Pruhs** both replied that they can follow up with the property owner and the State for an estimated timeline.
- 113 Second Avenue
  - **Ms. Sprinkle** asked how recently this property was acquired by the current owners. C. Clooten replied that he believes it was just within the last year, and the owners had hoped to clean up the property, clear the tiny cabin that existed, and build a new structure. He stated, however, it is a very small property, and he is not sure what their long-term plans are. He stated the attempt to communicate in-person with the owner was as well-received as he had hoped.
- 2628 Mercier Street
- 124 Second Avenue
  - C. Clooten's report outlined that a previous Building Official, 20 years prior, had given the owner approval to keep the building as is, provided that he obtain an engineer's report and plan for the structure, which the owner did. He expressed concern about potential legal action by the owner if the City were to try and have the structure demolished. **Ms. Sprinkle** stated that there has been another fire at that location, that abandoned cars have been deposited there, along with debris, and that the property is a constant magnet for nonsense. She stated there has not been much of a change for 40 years. C. Clooten replied that work had occurred to clean

up the property about 5 years ago. He stated he has not driven by it recently to assess the current status, but the City has not received any complaints that he is aware of and that is why it is listed as “no change.” **Mr. Ringstad** stated he believes the property owner is experiencing health problems.

- 2319 Rickert Avenue
- 737 7th Avenue
  - As this property was reported to have issues pertaining to disagreement with the owner’s insurance company regarding the City’s authority to inspect and issue directives for a single-family home, **Mayor Pruhs** shared insight from his experience in real estate. He stated that the issue at hand becomes a matter of valuation for an insurance claim and creates conflict between the City, the owner, and the insurance company. He explained that the insurance company wants to drive the value down for the sake of the claim, and the owner feels the need to fight that, which takes time. He stated that, meanwhile, the City is at the door communicating expectations to rectify problems with the property. He stated it is a lengthy process, and the property at 431 Gaffney (referenced earlier) had gone through a similar, two-year battle with an insurance company.
- 109 5th Avenue
- 719 Front Street
- 730 Front Street
- 305 Kellum Street
- 311 Bonnifield Street

**Mayor Pruhs** spoke to the process of abatement and the multiple steps involved. He stated that his new Executive Assistant has been tasked with helping move some of these properties forward.

**Ms. Rogers** asked about the red log building with a collapsed roof near the Jimmy Huntington Building and noted that it was not on C. Clooten’s list. C. Clooten responded that he is unsure if there had been a change in ownership, but he could look into it. **Mayor Pruhs** asked C. Clooten to find the address and he would track down the property owner.

**Mr. Marney** asked C. Clooten to confirm that the City does not have a code enforcement position – only inspectors for plumbing, mechanical, and electrical. C. Clooten confirmed that is correct. He stated that the individual previously tasked with code enforcement retired and has not yet been replaced. He explained that that person assisted with some plan review but that he has been responsible for those duties in the meantime. **Mayor Pruhs** added that that is something he is working on.

**Ms. Sprinkle** expressed gratitude that the topic of abatements was included on the agenda. She asked how most of the properties on C. Clooten’s list come to his attention and what the process is. C. Clooten stated that most issues are identified through the complaint process, then he visits the property and attempts to speak with the owner. He stated there is a complaint form on the City’s website. **Ms. Sprinkle** stated that it seems the timeline is very loose when a property is deemed dangerous or abandoned. She asked if there is anything in City code regarding a timeline. C. Clooten replied that there is not; he stated, however, that if there was a fire or a building collapse, the City addresses it immediately. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked for clarification on how fast “immediately”

is intended to be. C. Clooten answered by using some examples on the list, which indicate a timeline of about three months. He stated that they have to give the owners some breathing room to address all the issues involved with a fire or a structural failure. **Ms. Sprinkle** agreed to the need to give a property owner some time but stated that there are buildings which have sat for years seemingly without a resolution on the horizon. C. Clooten acknowledged that but stated that they are getting better about such things. He stated that the Fire Department communicates with his department when a fire occurs so that they can inspect. He indicated that badly damaged properties take a higher priority than others. The example of 430 Front Street was discussed, as a past problem property that had been cleaned up and was off their radar, even though a burned structure remained. **Ms. Sprinkle** stated that this was concerning to her. She asked if the City performs demolitions or if demolition work is contracted out. C. Clooten explained that sometimes smaller jobs are handled directly by Public Works, otherwise demolitions are sent out for bid. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if the City ever have issues with people inhabiting nuisance properties and, if so, whether the Building Official has to issue a certificate of occupancy in order for the structure to be reoccupied. C. Clooten answered that certificates of occupancy are not issued in those cases, but people should not be living at such a property, especially when the utilities have been shut off. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked C. Clooten if he thought dead-end streets were an issue for the City. C. Clooten replied that they are not, and the fact that some nuisance properties are located on dead-end streets is simply a coincidence and not necessarily a contributing factor. **Ms. Sprinkle** shared that after her discussion with Golden Heart Utilities (GHU), she understands that when they shut off water to a property, they contact the City to receive an excavation permit to dig the street. C. Clooten confirmed that GHU contacts the Engineering Department for the required permit. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if the Engineering Department informs the Building Department when that is going to happen. C. Clooten stated that they do not. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if he felt that was a problem. C. Clooten responded that it could be helpful if they were informed.

Chief of Staff Sanders spoke to staffing conditions across the City and stated that nearly every department is running on a skeleton crew. He explained that for abatement matters, there is only one City Attorney, three and a half people in the Building Department, and four engineers who are also working in the field on projects. He indicated that the abatement process is not going to be perfect or quick – not until more resources are put towards it. COS Sanders stated that there has been a vacant position in the Building Department for nearly two years, and the reason it is not filled is not for a lack of trying. He stated that the reality is that the City has more work than what it has resources for. **Ms. Sprinkle** agreed that the Building Department needs more help but stated that these issues did not happen overnight. She clarified that she does not blame C. Clooten but stated that she finds it troubling and feels it is a shame that Fairbanks looks like it does in some of these areas. She stated she wants to find ways to make things better.

**Mr. Cleworth**, having recently reviewed a report from City Attorney Chard, asked questions regarding abatements and legal issues surrounding properties. He asked whether the Fairbanks General Code (FGC) states that when sewer and water services are shut off, no one can come and go from the property without the issuance of a permit. C. Clooten explained that the FGC states that in such cases a structure cannot be inhabited and must be secured. He further explained that, at that point, the owner still has a right to enter the property with reason. He gave an example of an owner informing him that he would still need to return on multiple occasions to move tools and other items from the building. C. Clooten stated that with limited resources and a daytime work

schedule, he can only perform so much monitoring on individual properties. He stated that if the intent is to establish more thorough surveillance, the City would likely need to involve the police. **Mr. Cleworth** commented that it would be unlikely that legitimate visits to such properties would occur at 2:00 a.m. C. Clooten agreed but stated that it would not be for him to say. **Mr. Cleworth** asked what the City can do if there is proof that someone is violating the parameters of the process. C. Clooten replied he would need to coordinate with the City Attorney and the FPD, and, once they determine there is adequate proof, he could post to the property again. **Mr. Cleworth** asked if, at that point, the City could send Public Works to board up the building. C. Clooten answered that if they post to the property, the owner has rights within the process to respond, and if they do not respond by securing the building, then Public Works can initiate its process. He stated that the City has to have good proof to ensure success in any court proceedings that might ensure, and he spoke about a case that is currently into a four-year legal court. He stated that video footage showing someone coming and going does not show the purpose of their visit.

**Ms. Sprinkle** asked C. Clooten when he would typically be allowed or expected to enter a building to verify conditions. He answered that if water is to be turned back on, that is an instance when he would enter the structure and verify that utilities were working.

**Mr. Ringstad** asked how many of the properties on the list had situations where individuals were occupying a structure. C. Clooten stated that he does not believe any of the properties on the list are being occupied. **Mr. Ringstad** indicated that the 5th Avenue property seems to have occupants. C. Clooten stated that there may be some homeless individuals using one of the structures on Front Street. **Mr. Ringstad** stated that there are two or three properties on the list he believes have occupants. C. Clooten explained that in order to keep those individuals out of the buildings, the police need to be involved and with the current staffing shortages, it may not be worth the time required for enforcement. He reassured everyone that with the actions already in motion on the majority of the properties, the City should have resolutions in the next month or two.

**Ms. Sprinkle** commented that many people who live near these properties contact her and are beside themselves and feeling desperate, and she does not blame them. She stated that at times, it feels like the City is not doing anything. C. Clooten stated that he does not blame them either, but when he receives a complaint, he looks into it.

**Ms. Rogers** stated that when Council members hear comments about the perception that nothing is being done on a particular issue that involves a City function or service, it is the Council member's responsibility to try to help citizens understand the challenges and difficulties that exist in the process of rectifying issues that may seem simple to them. She stated that the Building Department is not the only route to answer these questions. She commented that these types of issues cannot be resolved overnight. C. Clooten agreed that it is not easy to abate someone's property. He stated that the City must have its ducks in a row in order to avoid litigation.

C. Clooten moved on to provide a report on permits issued by the Building Department and reported that, year-to-date, the department has generated \$760,000 in permit revenue. He stated that the Building Department's annual expenditures is budgeted at \$650,000. He stated he anticipates the total 2023 permit revenue to be between \$900,000 and \$1MM. He directed the Council's attention to the total construction valuation section of the report and pointed out that the

total valuation for new construction in the city is over \$66MM so far in 2023. He explained that as permits are issued for projects, the Building Department must visit and inspect the sites as construction progresses. He stated that when construction is complete and it is appropriate to do so, a certificate of occupancy is issued. He indicated that completing those projects is the department's number one goal and, while abatement issues are still important, abatements are further down on the list than these other department functions and responsibilities.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked what is being built in front of the old Sports Authority building. C. Clooten answered that that is the new location for Nuvision Credit Union. He highlighted the section of his report showing all current projects and their valuations and commented that new construction is doing great.

**Mayor Pruhs** thanked Building Official Clooten and stated that concludes Mayor's Comments.

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Mr. Ringstad** acknowledged that he had crossed his calendars recently and apologized for missing the recent work session.

**Mr. Marney** thanked C. Clooten for the report. He stated that he feels his frustration and is aware that C. Clooten has been in his role for a long time. He acknowledged that help is needed – not just in the Building Department – and he spoke in favor of a Code Enforcement Officer position. He thanked C. Williams for his comments, acknowledging that there are problems on the judicial side of the issues that were shared.

**Ms. Tidwell** stated that she had no comments.

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated she appreciated that the Council could have a conversation about abatements. She expressed her belief that if they can do better for the buildings in the city, tax revenues will increase, things will be better for their neighbors, and the city will be safer for the police and fire departments. She indicated that things would improve overall if the City could get its hands around those kinds of problems.

**Ms. Rogers** thanked those who provided testimony. She spoke highly of B. Butler and praised the compassionate approach she has shown in her work to support persons who often appear to be problematic in the community. She stated the work being done on behalf of residents is so important and they need to make sure that never consider a certain program or service as unworthy of being continued should they be in a situation where a funding source, such as a grant, is no longer available. She considered some hypothetical scenarios of this type and expressed her hope that the City never gets to that point. **Ms. Rogers** shared her thoughts on the need for individual citizens to take responsibility to uplift each other and help solve problems. She stated the City will never be able to provide a solution to every single challenge, and community members need to be accountable to each other by participating in uplifting efforts. She thanked Ms. Sprinkle for taking the lead and bringing to light some of the problems discussed tonight. She spoke to the importance of the terms used in the narrative about such challenges and to maintaining a positive focus. She stated there are many times when issues do not seem to go away, because the process for resolution



can be lengthy, which sometimes leads to a perception that things are not being accomplished. **Ms. Rogers** stated that the City must continue to chip away at issues, little by little, and be persistent. She praised Building Official Clooten and stated that the City could not have a better representative when it comes to the sensitive matters of abatement. Upon noticing Crisis Now Coordinator Brenda McFarland in the audience, **Ms. Rogers** added some final thoughts on the excellent efforts she has given over the last few years in addressing many of the challenges facing the community.

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked staff for the marked-up copy of the IBEW contract contained within the agenda packet. He asked if there would be a resolution prepared for the recently passed City paramedic Kevin Johnson. **Mayor Pruhs** affirmed that there will be a resolution at the following meeting. He stated that things have accelerated quickly since the accident, and he just learned earlier in the day that the service would take place on Saturday. **Mr. Cleworth** praised Officer Elzey's methods and downtown presence. He stated he has known Ofc. Elzey for many years and is a fan of his inclination towards lowkey enforcement. He stated that 90% of the time, simply talking to someone who is misbehaving is a sufficient way to resolve an issue and that allowing those who sometimes create problems in downtown areas to feel seen, heard, and treated with respect goes a long way. He commented that the other 10% of the time, it can be challenging and sometimes scary, but Ofc. Elzey knows people by name, what their stories are, and the predicaments they may be facing. He stated that familiarity gives Ofc. Elzey the ability to mitigate situations in a more effective way. **Mr. Cleworth** also thanked Building Official Clooten for his report on abatements and wondered whether some of the Council's frustration stems from not having the tools within the FGC to do what needs to be done. He suggested that the Council may need to beef them up. He acknowledged that some may take issue with that and feel that the City may at times go too heavy on a property, but some properties are willfully neglected, and the City should be making every effort to rectify situations. He stated that if C. Clooten has ideas for updates to the FGC as he goes about his duties, he should feel empowered to share those ideas. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that they have started some of that process, but it quickly became clear that they needed to get more minds involved. He stated that the list began as 10 properties and grew to 75, which equates to about three years' worth of work.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Ordinance No. 6254 – An Ordinance Ratifying a Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Fairbanks and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1547. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

#### ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- b) Ordinance No. 6255 – An Ordinance Increasing Wages for Commissioned Officers at the Fairbanks Police Department and Amending the 2023 City Operating Budget. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

**Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6255.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated that he requested to pull this item because he has some questions and observations. He stated he believes the Council needs to understand the mechanics of how the ordinance would work.

**Mayor Pruhs** explained that the ordinance covers the remainder of the budget cycle. He stated that after all the debate and discussion and consulting with staff, he believes a budget amendment is the quickest and easiest thing to do. He explained that when it comes to a labor contract, the Council must vote up or down, without an option to suggest changes. He stated that with a budget amendment, the Council has the option to make changes before voting on it.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated that his understanding is that the ordinance is effective until December 31, similar to what they tried to do with another contract, which was unsuccessful. He stated he has some concerns and sees some red flags and acknowledged that the Council will have the chance to review the ordinance in an upcoming work session. He mentioned the recent action taken to increase the tax cap, which generated a windfall of about \$1.5MM – the most new revenue he has seen for as long as he can remember. He commented that the Council has spent about half of that already for the coming year. He stated that in 2024, it appears the City will have about \$680,000 in new revenue based on current consumer price index (CPI) data and that the new revenues will be less than half of the “shot in the arm” the City received this year. **Mr. Cleworth** continued by stating that more things set in motion that use up the windfall of funds and appear to create obligations for the future is problematic. He cautioned that paying for too many things based on cut positions which have been protected by the Council for many years is fiscally dangerous. He asked the Council if that is really the intent and admitted he does not have an answer. He stated he is unsure if a lateral police officer eligible for the recently approved \$60,000 hiring bonus would also receive this \$4 per hour raise and stated that he does not believe they should. He recognized that Dispatch, which is not included in the ordinance, would potentially get added to the applicable group of this increase, given the connected nature of those two departments. He commented that the IBEW contract before the Council also adds to the total dollar commitment come January 1. He stated that his biggest concern is the quick movement on the ordinance with so many moving parts, and he stated he is not sure if these are things the Council can commit to for a year or two down the road. He expressed hope that some of his concerns could be addressed at the next work session with CFO Bell present.

**Mr. Ringstad** stated that he assumed that the increase proposed was to be a permanent raise, not temporary to the end of the year. **Mayor Pruhs** reminded the Council that more detailed financials will be provided at the upcoming work session. **Mr. Ringstad** asked if they needed to include in the budget amendment an adjustment for the reduction of positions. **Mayor Pruhs** clarified that they had already officially reduced the number of budgeted positions as part of a previous ordinance where the \$10,000 benefit was approved. **Mr. Ringstad** asked if a budget amendment was required to accomplish that, and **Mayor Pruhs** responded that it was not. **Mr. Ringstad** pointed out that the current ordinance amends the budget, but the last ordinance did not. He expressed concern with doing something like this just for four months and then having folks feel like the rug is being pulled out from under them. He pointed out that contract negotiations will not occur for another year, so if this is meant as only a temporary benefit, there will be a large gap.

**Mr. Marney** stated that he agrees with Mr. Ringstad and that as an employee, he would not trust this. He stated that since January, he has been a part of the conversation, which has always been about a letter of agreement (LOA). He stated he does not know why they got away from that, and he hopes they are not afraid of negotiations.

**Ms. Sprinkle** expressed that her preceding comments had created an interesting twist on the topic, which she was not expecting, but she is not for or against the ordinance at this time.

**Mr. Cleworth** shared that according to his calculations, the ordinance would amount to a cost of approximately \$400,000, which would be added to the cost of the other ordinances recently passed. He stated that the Council still has to fund a contract for the Fire Department this year and indicated that there are red flags popping up based on the numbers the Council has seen. He stated that, combined with the supplement retirement, officers would be seeing about a 20% boost. **Mr. Cleworth** indicated that the Council needs to look at how the increase can be funded long-term, if that is the goal, and that if the intent is not to fund the increase in perpetuity, he would rather consider an equivalent bonus. He commented that he may even be in favor of reopening the CBA early to show good faith.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADVANCE ORDINANCE NO. 6255 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Tidwell, Cleworth, Ringstad, Sprinkle, Rogers

NAYS: Marney

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS (Information and Reports)**

a) Committee Reports

**Ms. Rogers** stated that she did not have any reports since their last meeting but reminded those present that the Fairbanks Diversity Council would meet the following evening.

**Ms. Tidwell** stated she had nothing to report.

**Mr. Ringstad** shared that there will be a Finance Committee meeting Wednesday and a Permanent Fund Review Board meeting Thursday.

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated she had no committee reports but suggested that the Council consider holding a meeting to receive more information about the Polaris Building project. **Mayor Pruhs** declined the suggestion of a meeting but affirmed that information will be shared as it becomes available.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated he had nothing to report.

**Mr. Marney** stated he had nothing to report.

## WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

- a) Clay Street Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes of June 7, 2023

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

### COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

**Ms. Tidwell** stated she had no comments but appreciated the opportunity to attend remotely.

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

**Mr. Ringstad** shared that it occurred to him as he considered the Council's calendar of meetings, that the average wage of a Council member is about \$4 per hour.

**Ms. Sprinkle** expressed appreciation for the Mayor allowing Building Official Clooten to spend so much time provided a thorough report to the Council. She acknowledged that she is passionate about abatements. She shared that her garden is finally growing, so it actually feels like summer.

**Ms. Rogers** thanked everyone in the room for working together to accomplish wonderful things for the community. She stated she thinks that sometimes they forget to remember the pluses, and the minuses overtake their attitudes. She expressed the importance of remaining positive.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked that the Clerk's Office convey to the members of the Clay Street Cemetery Commission, particularly Chair Aldean Kilbourn, that they are doing amazing work. He recognized that much of it is volunteer-based and that Public Works also contributes significantly to making that place something the City can be proud of. He asked for confirmation that there was still an empty City position on the FNSB Planning Commission. **Mayor Pruhs** shared that he will meet Thursday with the Borough Mayor to continue this conversation. He outlined recent progress on the matter but stated he would have more information after the meeting. **Mr. Cleworth** shared that he had a copy of a newspaper from August of 1966, which included an article about Borough projects at the time. He stated that a total of \$8.2MM in bond issues were to be presented to Borough voters on October 4 of that year and, after a 45-minute public hearing, the Assembly at the time passed the issue by a 10-5 vote. He shared the names of those who voted on the matter but highlighted that the total number of votes did not equal the number of voting individuals on the Assembly. He pointed out that City Council members' votes counted twice, which explained the discrepancy. He explained that when the City used to have a seat on the Borough Assembly, the City had two votes. He highlighted how far they have digressed over the years on that particular matter, and he gave the newspaper to Mr. Ringstad, as a relative of his was listed as one of the voting members on that Assembly.

### CITY CLERK'S REPORT

City Clerk Snider thanked Mr. Cleworth for his positive words regarding the Clay Street Cemetery Commission and agreed that it is one of the City's hardest working and most productive commissions. She reminded the Council that her quarterly report had gone out earlier in the day.

She shared information about the upcoming candidate filling period and stated that filing will run from July 17 – 31. In response to earlier comments, she shared that the City has a general complaint form available online titled “Tell It to City Hall” and individuals can use this tool to send comments or complaints.

**CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT**

City Attorney Chard stated that he had nothing to report but thanked everyone for their service.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.



\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID PRUHS, MAYOR

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_  
D. DANYELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: CC