



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, OCTOBER 23, 2023  
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 2024 City Legislative and Capital Priorities with the Interior Delegation, 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 Pruhs presiding and the following Councilmembers in attendance:

Councilmembers 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:                        D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk  
   Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff  
   Thomas Chard, City Attorney  
   Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer (remotely)  
   Ron Dupee, Police Chief  
   Rick Sweet, Deputy Police Chief  
   Nathan Werner, Police Captain  
   Ofc. Butler, Police Officer  
   Ofc. Conrad, Police Officer  
   Ofc. Sullivan, Police Officer  
   Teal Soden, Public Information Officer  
   Andrew Coccaro, Assistant Fire Chief  
   Kristi Meredith, Dispatch Manager (remotely)  
   Robert Pristash, City Engineer  
   Brenda McFarlane, Crisis Now Coordinator  
   Marsha Oss, Reentry Coordinator

**INVOCATION**

The invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

**FLAG SALUTATION**

**Mayor Pruhs** asked City Attorney Chard to lead the flag salutation.

## CEREMONIAL MATTERS (Proclamations, Introductions, Recognitions, Awards)

**Mayor Pruhs** stated that several new Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) officers would be sworn in. He invited them forward along with Police Chief Dupee and Deputy Police Chief Sweet.

Deputy Chief Sweet introduced three new lateral-transfer officers:

- Joseph Butler, from southeast Georgia, has nine years of law enforcement experience. He was a sergeant, a training instructor, and member of the SWAT team at his former department.
- Mike Sullivan joins the FPD from Texas, with eight and a half years' experience. He was also an instructor and trainer in many areas.
- Christopher Conrad transferred from the Arkansas/Kansas area. He previously spent one and a half years in corrections, plus a year in law enforcement.

Deputy Chief Sweet administered the Oath of Office to all three officers.

**Mayor Pruhs** welcomed the new officers to the City and stated that they are joining a great team.

## CITIZENS' COMMENTS

*[Clerk Note: Names of citizens who provide comments may not be spelled correctly if their name was illegible on the physical sign-up sheet.]*

Victor Buberger – V. Buberger thanked Public Works for fixing the lights at the intersection he identified at the last meeting. He noted another pole in that area which he believes needs a bulb replaced. He stated that it appears the City is always involved in labor negotiations and that everyone always wants more money. He shared that years ago, when he worked in various fields of labor, if someone complained too much, they just got rid of them and found a way to automate their job with machines. He complimented Public Works and the FPD and said it is refreshing to see new blood. He wondered if any City employee has an annual salary below \$100,000. He suggested maybe they should give the Mayor more money and concluded with the hope that the City can keep the snow plowed.

**Mayor Pruhs**, hearing no requests for additional comments, declared Citizen's Comments closed.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

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

**Ms. Sprinkle** pulled Resolution No. 5089, item 13(c) of New Business, 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 September 25, 2023

APPROVED on the Consent Agenda

**SPECIAL ORDERS**

- a) The Fairbanks City Council heard interested citizens concerned with the following liquor license application for renewal:

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
2124	Fenders	Beverage Dispensary	636, LLC	636 28th Avenue

Mr. Marney, seconded by Ms. Tidwell, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the liquor license application for renewal.

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

Mr. Ringstad shared that he recently saw comments about strong odors present by 30th Avenue and South Cushman Street and that he noticed it as well when driving through the area. Mayor Pruhs reminded Mr. Ringstad that the item before them was an application for a liquor license.

Ms. Rogers noted that this is the first time in the years she has been on the Council that she has seen a sexual assault included on the call report associated with any license application.

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

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

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- b) The Fairbanks City Council heard interested citizens concerned with the following marijuana license application for renewal:

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
10958	Green Life Supply, LLC	Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility	Green Life Supply, LLC	511 30th Avenue

Ms. Tidwell, seconded by Ms. Sprinkle, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the marijuana license application for renewal.

Mayor Pruhs called for Public Testimony.

Victor Buberger – V. Buberger stated that he smoked marijuana for a long time, and 25 years ago his house caught on fire. He shared that he endured serious smoke inhalation in his lungs and quit smoking as a result, but he enjoys the smell of marijuana whenever he drives past the area.

**Mayor Pruhs** called for any further discussion and heard none.

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

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

NAYS: None

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

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

**Mayor Pruhs** invited Public Information Officer (PIO) Teal Soden to give an update on the FPD's recruitment efforts as well as the department's community involvement.

T. Soden shared the following details on FPD recruitment efforts year-to-date for 2023:

- In 2023, 70 people, including 17 laterals, completed the written exam - an uptick in interest, given that only 53 people, including 9 laterals, completed the written exam in 2022.
- Four officers have been hired so far in 2023, three of whom were sworn in at the meeting, plus one entry-level recruit who is completing the academy in Sitka.
- Currently there are 15 applicants at various stages in the recruitment process, with another 7 signed up to take the written test in the coming weeks.

T. Soden also reported on FPD involvement with various community events and efforts, including:

- In April, several officers completed the "Caps for Cops" program with local Alaska Native elders. The officers and elders got to know more about each other's backgrounds while the elders gave direction and assistance in making beaver skin hats, which can now be worn by officers on duty. Another cycle of this program is being planned for other officers.
- FDP continues to hold regular meetings with the NAACP and Alaska Native leadership.
- In late August, the FPD participated in Youth Safety Day at the Carlson Center and brought one of their specialized vehicles, which got a lot of attention and excitement from kids.
- Deputy Chief Sweet and his wife recently participated in Costco's "Trunk or Treat" event.
- On October 12, there was a community ceremony to rename the police station and dispatch center to the "Sergeant Allen Brandt Police Station and Emergency Communications Center." Several members of Sergeant Brandt's family attended. It has been 7 years since Sgt. Brandt passed, and T. Soden encouraged everyone to keep his family in their thoughts.
- FPD hosted a booth at the Go Winter! Expo the previous weekend, handing out glow sticks are part of Operation Glow. They also distributed recruitment materials, raised money for the "Shop with a Cop" program, and interacted with hundreds of community members.
- Saturday will be National Drug Takeback Day, in collaboration with the local FBI and Fairbanks Native Association's Community Opioid Intervention Project. The purpose is to reduce overdoses and overdose deaths, as well as to prevent prescription drug abuse. Residents can drop off unused prescription drugs off at the police station for safe disposal.
- On Halloween, officers will be out and about, giving away glow sticks as part of Operation Glow, to keep kids safe and visible to drivers.
- FPD will participate in a food drive in mid-November at Costco, collecting items requested by the Food Bank.
- FPD will repeat the popular "Shop with a Cop" program in December, a program that pairs officers with local youth in need.

T. Soden shared that the Alaska Department of Public Safety released its 2022 crime statistics reports, and she is happy to email the report to the Council.

**Ms. Rogers** mentioned another event that FPD participated in this year: Pizza with Police in the Plaza. She stated that she hopes that event will continue in the future.

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked T. Soden for her report and asked if she knew how many Volunteers in Policing (VIP) members are currently have involved. T. Soden responded that she is not sure of the exact number but that Larry Soden was recently promoted as Captain of that program, and VIP Executive Director Lorna Illingworth maintains connections with the Fairbanks Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), to pull additional help when needed.

**Mr. Marney** thanked T. Soden and commented that the Council needs more information of that kind. He said that the Council strives to take action to support the police and other departments, so it is nice to hear back about their successes.

**Mayor Pruhs** also thanked T. Soden for her report. He praised her commitment to the police force, which he sees every day, and stated it is a pleasure and honor to work with her. He acknowledged the upcoming resignation of Fire Chief Raygor and expressed appreciation for his work at the Fairbanks Fire Department (FFD). He stated that it is budget time, and he recounted how 2023 involved a lot of heavy lifting for the Council: completion of two new collective bargaining agreements (CBAs); deposits to the Capital and Permanent Funds totaling nearly \$3.5MM; and the approval of wage increases, recruitment bonuses, and retention incentives for the FPD. He stated he believes that the Council is a good working group with a great synergy. He stated that the Council would have his proposed budget within the next week and recalled a time when the Council was given a budget with only a \$100 surplus. He shared how the Council at that time was forced to make hard decisions. He indicated that the Council would see a healthy reserve and would be able to make adjustments as it sees fit.

### **COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated she is thrilled to see the new police officers, and she asked if the lateral hire bonus played a part in their recruitment. Chief Dupee indicated that two of the three officers were already in the process of onboarding before the increased bonus was implemented, but Officer Conrad's hiring was a result of the bonus. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if there was any update on the abatement of the properties on Front Street. **Mayor Pruhs** answered that the contract, totaling \$130,000, had gone out. He stated that he was unsure if work had already begun, but he would send an update via email.

**Ms. Rogers** expressed gratitude for the opportunity to meet directly with legislators during the earlier Work Session. She pledged to work with the legislative committee in the coming year, seeking more direct communication with legislators. She recalled hearing many of them indicating a desire for regular contact from groups like the City Council.

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked T. Soden again for her report. He expressed regret for missing the renaming ceremony at the police station due to a family medical issue. He recalled the time when Sgt Brandt, recently out of surgery, attended a Council meeting for a resolution honoring him. He commented

that little did they know it would be their last time seeing him. He stated it is encouraging to see the FPD lateral transfers from out of state, and he is glad that they are not stealing officers from other local agencies. He suggested that the Alaskan experience may have influenced the new officers' choice to come to Fairbanks and hopes they find their work fulfilling.

**Ms. Tidwell** welcomed the new officers and their families, stated that it is great to see three large families added to the community, and commented that she was happy to hear the FPD report.

**Mr. Marney** thanked V. Buberger for his honesty and for looking out for citizens by keeping an eye out for potholes and light poles that need attention.

**Mr. Ringstad** stated that he had the pleasure of attending some recent Borough Assembly meetings. He shared that a week-and-a-half ago the agenda included the issue of potentially moving the borough election date, and it was an interesting discussion with a lot of public testimony. He reported that at the beginning of the meeting, the Presiding Officer stated that other local municipalities, such as the cities of Fairbanks and North Pole, as well as the FNSB School Board, were welcome to participate in the discussion as it pertained to them. He reported that in his comments, he pointed out to the Assembly that four City Council members were in attendance, which they likely had not seen in a long time. He shared that the discussion on the issue was long, and the meeting went to 11:30 p.m., at which point it adjourned to the following Thursday. He stated that the issue of the election date failed and that another topic, unauthorized subdivisions, also ate up a lot of time. He reported that after two nights of the same meeting going past 11 p.m., he left with a distinct appreciation that the City Council does not do that. He expressed his opinion that the Council's system seems to be better than the Borough's. **Mr. Ringstad** mentioned that a Permanent Fund Review Board would be held later in the week on Wednesday. He also shared that he had the opportunity to meet FPD Officer Lai recently when he discovered someone sleeping in his driveway and could not get them to leave. He stated that he does not want Fairbanks to be a place where his 12-year-old granddaughter is afraid to go into her own driveway. He expressed appreciation for how Officer Lai handled the situation: efficiently and professionally.

**Ms. Rogers** assured everyone that Councilmembers were cognizant of the constraints and parameters of the Open Meetings Act (OMA) when four members attended the Borough Assembly meeting. She stated that they sat apart and did not congregate before or after the meeting.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a) Ordinance No. 6263, as Amended – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Section 2-119, Citizens' Comments and Order of Business. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs and Council Members Marney, Rogers, and Cleworth. ADVANCED a second time at the Regular Meeting of October 9, 2023.

*At the October 9, 2023 regular meeting, **Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Ms. Tidwell**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6263, as Amended. The motion remained on the floor.*

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

**Ms. Sprinkle** expressed appreciation for the work that went into the ordinance, especially considering what occurred in September during Citizens’ Comments.

**Mr. Cleworth** pointed out a typo [scrivener’s error] on page two of the ordinance. **Mayor Pruhs** stated that the item would be corrected.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6263, AS AMENDED, AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Rogers, Tidwell, Ringstad, Marney, Sprinkle, Cleworth  
NAYS: None  
**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6263, as Amended, ADOPTED.

**CERTIFICATION OF 2023 REGULAR ELECTION AND OATHS OF OFFICE**

a) Certification of the 2023 Regular Election Results

City Clerk Snider read the following 2023 Regular Election results into the record:

**LONNY MARNEY**, having received a majority of the votes cast for CITY COUNCIL SEAT E, for a three-year term ending October 2026, is hereby declared reelected as a Member of the Fairbanks City Council.

**JOHN RINGSTAD**, having received a majority of the votes cast for CITY COUNCIL SEAT F, for a three-year term ending October 2026, is hereby declared elected as a Member of the Fairbanks City Council.

**PROPOSITION A**, which stated “*Should City of Fairbanks Ordinance No. 6256, as Amended, be ratified?*” passed by a vote of 2,454 “yes” votes to 576 “no” votes.

**Ms. Sprinkle**, seconded by **Ms. Tidwell**, moved to CERTIFY the 2023 Regular Election Results.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO CERTIFY THE 2023 REGULAR ELECTION RESULTS, AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Sprinkle, Cleworth, Ringstad, Marney, Tidwell, Rogers  
NAYS: None  
**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED and the 2023 Regular Election results CERTIFIED.

**Mayor Pruhs** called for a brief transition recess for the signing of the election certification documents. The meeting reconvened following the brief recess.

b) Oaths of Office and Seating of Reelected Council Members

Clerk Snider administered the Oaths of Office for Councilmembers Marney Ringstad.

## NEW BUSINESS

- a) Resolution No. 5087 – A Resolution Awarding a Contract to National Life Group/Life Insurance Company of the Southwest to Provide a Supplemental Plan for Commissioned Fairbanks Police Department Officers. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs and Council Member Sprinkle.

APPROVED on the Consent Agenda

- b) Resolution No. 5088 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) Behavioral Health Mini Grants. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the Consent Agenda

- c) Resolution No. 5089 – A Resolution Clarifying the Fee for “Fire Inspection, Investigation, and Technical Services” and “Routine Safety Checks, Response to Safety Complaints.” Introduced by Mayor Pruhs and Council Member Cleworth.

**Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5089.

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated that she requested to pull the item as it felt like a surprise. She asked for verification that it would not undo some of the Council’s past work of updating the fee schedule.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated that the resolution would not change any fees. He explained that when the final vote on Resolution No. 5076 occurred, he thought the Council was voting on an amendment, and he missed the opportunity to express his concerns. He stated that if the City mandates an inspection that a business may not want, the City should cover the cost. He recalled sharing his views later in the meeting after the resolution had been approved and stated that before the meeting was over, a motion to reconsider was entertained but failed. He said he feels strongly enough about the issue that he was inclined to bring forward the resolution. He acknowledged that the City had not performed inspections in quite some time and that, fiscally, the resolution may not change anything. **Mr. Cleworth** shared that he gets complaints all the time about the City charging for garbage collection on top of property taxes, plus a business licensing fee. He stated that mandatory fees are sore subjects, but the City now depends on many of them as funding sources. He expressed gratitude that the City has a diverse revenue stream, where property taxes account for only half of the City’s revenue.

**Ms. Rogers** stated that she has heard Mr. Cleworth speak on this subject many times, and she agrees. She stated that fire inspections are for the safety and security of the community, which can be a mandatory service but should not incur a fee to business owners.

**Mr. Marney** shared that he has had two opportunities to visit with Fire Marshal Bryan, who is incredibly backlogged just with state-mandated inspections for places like daycares, senior centers, etc. He shared that he asked him how long it might be before he is even able to pursue inspections for private businesses, and he was told that it would be about five years.



**Ms. Sprinkle** asked Fire Chief Raygor to speak on the matter. Chief Raygor explained that the previous resolution was a result of a Finance Committee recommendation after its review of the City's fee schedule. He stated that the Committee recommended an increase, and the conditions for adding a position at FFD were tied, in part, to the revenue that would be generated from inspections. He stated that the proposed resolution seems to flip the Finance Committee's recommendation.

**Ms. Rogers** asked if it was realistic for the fees to cover the cost of the position. Chief Raygor indicated that there are 1,500 buildings within the City that are supposed to be inspected annually, but the FFD is very backlogged. She stated that the Council is responsible for finding the funds for the position, whether it is tied to a service fee or not. Chief Raygor agreed and reiterated that this was the recommendation from the Finance Committee.

**Ms. Tidwell** asked what the impact would be if the City stopped charging for those inspections. Chief Financial Officer Bell reported that so far in 2023 the City billed for a total of 31 inspections with \$6,087 in revenue, using the prior rate.

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated she would think a business owner would view the fee as part of the cost of doing business, especially larger retailers that are responsible for ensuring their building is safe.

**Mr. Ringstad** stated that he is not sure what would really change but that larger businesses could absorb a \$125 fee; he stated that the City would likely not get around to smaller businesses for years. Chief Raygor confirmed that the FFD has not been performing inspections on most businesses due to staffing shortages and that, other than inspections required by the state, the FFD typically only inspects as a result of a complaint. He stated he is unsure when the FFD may be able to perform other inspections, as they are behind on alcohol, marijuana, and daycare businesses.

**Mr. Cleworth** referenced an email the Council received from an individual asking why there was no fiscal note associated with the change of fees. He stated he explained to the person that it was because the inspections were not currently happening, so there would be no fiscal impact. He explained that there was a difference in opinion internally at FFD on this subject years ago when inspections were actively occurring, and they requested to eliminate the fee. He said it reminds him of banks that take your money and then have an associated fee for each service. He asked if the language in the final paragraph of the resolution would be added to the fee schedule. City Attorney Chard stated that because the resolution does not state that it would amend the schedule of fees, it would not. **Mr. Cleworth** stated that the trouble with resolutions is that they are forgotten with time. He indicated that the verbiage in the fee schedule should be changed and asked if that would require an ordinance. Attorney Chard clarified that it does not require an ordinance, but it would need to be stated in the proposed resolution. He added he was not aware that was the intent.

**Ms. Sprinkle** asked what the impact on workload would be if the FFD offered free preventative inspections and a lot of businesses took advantage of that. Chief of Staff Sanders pointed out that the language of the resolution states that businesses would be charged "when the inspection is requested by the business owner." He explained that the intent is to eliminate a fee for an inspection that is unwanted, not required by law, and not part of an investigation. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked about situations such as a fire exit being blocked. Chief Raygor clarified that inspections in response to a complaint are different. **Ms. Sprinkle** indicated that the final sentence, stating that preventative

inspections may be offered at no charge is still confusing. She wondered who would be making the call on the free ones. Assistant Fire Chief Cocco explained that the Fire Marshal's office does not currently perform any preventative inspections and that all inspections are required by ordinance, National Fire Protection Association standards, etc. He clarified, however, that sometimes an engine company will go out, inspect a business, and give them pointers, and this helps the department be familiar with the business layout. He stated that those types of reviews are always free, as far as he knows, and businesses can request them. He indicated the FFD is trying to ensure that if the Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshal, or Battalion Chief needs to inspect, the City can recoup the cost. He clarified that a first visit due to a complaint is free, but if further complaints occur and issues are identified, charges may be assessed. He stated that their focus with the fee schedule update was on mandated tasks, which are supposed to be annual, but sometimes stretch out to 18 months depending on the type of business and occupancy. He stated that the term "preventative inspection" is not used in at the FFD, but if it is referring to their company-level inspections, those are free. He confirmed that investigations, complaints, code enforcement, etc. are areas where the FFD charges fees. **Ms. Sprinkle** stated that given the explanation, she would like to see the final sentence removed.

**Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to POSTPONE Resolution No. 5089 to the next regular meeting.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO POSTPONE RESOLUTION NO. 5089 TO THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

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

#### a) Committee Reports

**Mr. Ringstad** reported that the Permanent Fund Review Board will meet later in the week and that the Finance Committee has been working through many items. He shared that the Committee concurred that splitting off from the work sessions has been beneficial, allowing members to have substantive discussions and a more focused effort on longer-term fiscal issues for the City.

**Mr. Marney** shared that the City held a successful Q&A session, led by CFO Bell, for any interested Discretionary Fund grant applicants. He reported that the prior week he attended the Explore Fairbanks Board of Directors meeting. He stated they will host the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) convention this week, and he volunteered to greet and direct attendees.

**Ms. Tidwell** reported that the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met last week and forwarded some asks to the Department of Transportation (DOT), one of which was to identify the individual who gave the green light on the [Manh Choh Kinross] ore haul. She indicated that another request was to put a pause on that project until the safety study currently being done is completed. She stated they will soon be going through the 59 suggestions from Kinney Engineering for mitigating safety risks of the ore haul. **Mayor Pruhs** stated that when he appointed

Ms. Tidwell to that committee, she was the best person for the job; he added that he is appreciative of her work. He stated that her standards are impeccable, and the Council will back her decisions.

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated that the Chena Riverfront Commission quarterly meeting should happen soon. She agreed that the Finance Committee is doing well, and members are excited to keep the same Council and community members in place for the coming year. She said the Committee will start looking at the alcohol tax soon. She shared that she attended the recent FAST Planning public open house on transit plans at Pioneer Park for one sole purpose: to share the concern expressed by a citizen at a Council meeting earlier in the summer regarding the proximity of the Veterans Affairs office to the transit system. She added that she is waiting for the next Polaris Work Group meeting.

**Ms. Rogers** stated she also looks forward to the next Polaris Work Group meeting. She indicated that she is active with the Fairbanks Diversity Council (FDC), which hosted a booth at the recent International Friendship Day event. She added that anyone who has never participated in that event owes it to themselves to do so. She stated she looks forward to starting the Legislative Information Group again, which will have a varying meeting schedule based on needs. She reported that the Opioid Work Group's last meeting was cancelled but they, along with the Housing and Homeless Committee and the Fairbanks Reentry Coalition, are very active and responsive to community needs. She shared that the prior week, she and other members of those groups were invited by Pete Kelly to tour the Fairbanks Rescue Mission, learn more about its programs and operations, and partake in a very fine lunch. She reported that the Fairbanks Native Association's Interagency Transition Council meets every few months and should be coming together soon. She spoke to the importance of the recent Borough Assembly meetings and stated that although the Council has scheduled assignments to represent, they should feel inclined to attend more frequently and not treat it as an obligation. She stated she believes the more the Assembly and Council understand each other, the more the two bodies can work together to accomplish things for the community.

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

b) 2023-2024 Committee Assignments

**Mayor Pruhs** indicated that, unless there were any objections, all existing committee assignments will remain the same. He recalled that at the last meeting, he mentioned possibly making a change by moving Ms. Rogers and Mr. Cleworth to the Finance Committee, but after seeing the synergy and progress of the current Committee makeup, and with the recommendation of CFO Bell, he believes keeping things as they are will be best. **Ms. Rogers** expressed appreciation to the Mayor and stated she would not want to give up other committees to serve on the Finance Committee.

### COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

**Mr. Cleworth** shared that when he swapped with Ms. Sprinkle for a Borough Assembly meeting, he never would have guessed that he would be attending a meeting where they would be discussing an ordinance to reinstate the City as the appeals board for the Planning Commission. He explained that this has been an ongoing issue for years, and he feels strongly that it should happen. He shared that the reason it changed in 2016 was viewed as somewhat retaliatory after the Borough Mayor disagreed with a Council's decision pertaining to a conditional use permit for a school in the Slaterville area. He recounted a protocol error during the associated Planning Commission

meeting, where a motion to reconsider was entertained after an unusual 30-minute recess. He explained how there was no vote on the actual issue, and the City identified that as problematic. He recalled that another issue at the time was an effort by that same Borough Mayor to rename Terminal Street, which many testified against due to the historical significance of it being the terminus of the railroad depot at the time. He shared that that ultimately, the City Council voted not to allow the renaming. He expressed hope that the Borough ordinance would pass, and he stated he would take the opportunity to share background information with the Assembly, as many members are likely not aware of the events from 2016. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if the City had weighed in on the issue. **Mr. Cleworth** referred Ms. Sprinkle to Resolution No. 5087, which the Council unanimously approved at its last meeting; he stated he would share that with the Assembly. He also congratulated Mr. Marney and Mr. Ringstad on their new terms of office.

**Ms. Rogers** congratulated the two Councilmembers on winning their respective seats. She thanked Chief Raygor for his 28 years of service to the City and stated that is a long time to be devoted to the work he does. She shared that anytime she has been in his presence, his deep knowledge and expertise is apparent, and she admires his work and wishes him well.

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated she is happy to see Mr. Marney and Mr. Ringstad continue for another three years and is looking forward to working on the budget.

**Mr. Ringstad** thanked Chief Raygor for all he has done for the City and wished him luck in his future endeavors. He also thanked the other Councilmembers for their kind words and shared that during the campaign season, he often spoke of the great working relationship that exists among Councilmembers. He indicated that was one of the reasons he was willing to continue serving.

**Mr. Marney** echoed Mr. Ringstad's comments and shared that with this Council, it is clear that members check politics at the door and work collectively for the citizens of Fairbanks.

**Ms. Tidwell** stated she is very happy to have both Mr. Marney and Mr. Ringstad still on the Council. She spoke about the upcoming Borough ordinance regarding the appeal process for the Planning Commission, a body she also she serves on. She stated that near the end of the Borough ordinance, there is language that indicates she would be grandfathered on the Planning Commission, but only until the end of her current term, which is December 2024. She stated she wished she had seen that language before the Council approved its resolution of support, because she would have liked to draw attention to it. She explained that the City does not currently have any representation on the Commission other than herself. **Mayor Pruhs** stated that Mr. Ringstad's nephew, Walker Ringstad, will be filling one of the seats, and he will ensure that all City's seats are filled.

**Mr. Ringstad** noted other information regarding commission vacancies in the City Clerk's report and asked for clarification. Clerk Snider shared that in addition to Ms. Tidwell, Joseph Collier is currently serving as a City representative on the Planning Commission. She confirmed what had been stated regarding Walker Ringstad. She reported that Aaron Gibson had previously applied for one of the seats; however, his application remained pending due to uncertainty, at the time, regarding the issue of the number of City seats on the Commission. She stated that additionally, he was running for a Borough Assembly seat, which would have disqualified him if elected. She explained that since that did not occur, the Borough Mayor's Office is now inquiring as to whether

the City may be interested in recommending the appointment of A. Gibson. She indicated that she will be working with Mayor Pruhs to get all City seats filled. **Mr. Ringstad** cited the language stating that the Council would recommend a name for the seats. **Mayor Pruhs** clarified that traditionally, he would present a name to the Council for its approval, after which he would forward that name to the Borough Mayor, who submits it to the Assembly for confirmation. He clarified that it is not meant to be a City Council member, but in Ms. Tidwell's situation, she was already serving on the Commission prior to her election to the Council. **Ms. Tidwell** clarified her concern that if the Assembly passes its ordinance as written and the Council returns to being the entity that hears appeals on the Planning Commission's actions, she will need to recuse herself on those appeal proceedings as long as she is serving in both roles.

**Mayor Pruhs** congratulated both Mr. Marney and Mr. Ringstad on retaining their Council seats.

### **CITY CLERK'S REPORT**

Clerk Snider also congratulated Mr. Marney and Mr. Ringstad and noted that their reelection saves the City money, as there will be no travel funds spent to send new members to the Alaska Municipal League annual conference for training.

**Ms. Rogers** called attention to the work of City Clerk Snider. She applauded her attention to detail, mindfulness of expenses, and thorough quarterly report to the Council.

### **CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

Attorney Chard reported on a house near 10th Avenue which had caught fire a couple of times over the years and was abated in 2020. He explained that the owner filed a complaint with the court the following year. He shared that the court recently issued its ruling and sided with the City. He stated that while it took three years to resolve, he is pleased to report a favorable decision.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Mr. Ringstad**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ENTER into an Executive Session to discuss Vlasios Vlasakakis v. City of Fairbanks.

**Mayor Pruhs** called for a voice vote on the motion to ENTER into an Executive Session to discuss Vlasios Vlasakakis v. City of Fairbanks, and all members voted in favor.

**Ms. Sprinkle**, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to ENTER into an Executive Session to receive an update on Roberts et al. v. City of Fairbanks.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked if the Council could legally enter that Executive Session, as it had not been publicly noticed. Attorney Chard explained that it would only be permitted if the matter was of an urgent nature. **Mayor Pruhs** stated that he does not believe the topic meets that criterion. Attorney Chard recommended the Council include it in the next Work Session or Regular Meeting agenda.

**Ms. Sprinkle** withdrew her motion.

**Mayor Pruhs** called for a brief recess, after which the Council reconvened in Executive Session.

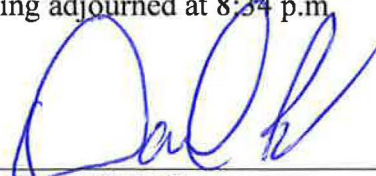
a) Vlasios Vlasakakis v. City of Fairbanks (*Entered at 8:08 p.m.*)

The City Council met in Executive Sessions to discuss the above item. Guidance was given to the City Attorney, and no action was taken. The regular meeting resumed at 8:33 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Hearing no objection, **Mayor Pruhs** declared the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

  
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DAVID PRUHS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
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D. DANYELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: CC