



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA NO. 2024-09  
**REGULAR MEETING – APRIL 22, 2024**  
MEETING WILL BE HELD VIA [ZOOM WEBINAR](#) AND AT  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

---

WORK SESSION  
5:30 p.m. – Downtown Fairbanks 2040 Plan

---

REGULAR MEETING  
6:30 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL
2. INVOCATION
3. FLAG SALUTATION
4. CEREMONIAL MATTERS (Proclamations, Introductions, Recognitions, Awards)
5. CITIZENS’ COMMENTS, oral communications to the City Council on any item pertaining to City business that is not up for public hearing. The total comment period is 30 minutes, and testimony is limited to three minutes. Any person wishing to speak needs to sign up on the list located in the hallway. Respectful standards of decorum and courtesy should be observed by all speakers. Remarks should be directed to the City Council as a body rather than to any particular Council Member or member of the staff. In consideration of others, please silence all cell phones and electronic devices.
6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA  
  
Consent agenda items are indicated by asterisks (\*). Consent agenda items are considered together unless a council member requests that the item be returned to the general agenda. Ordinances on the approved consent agenda are automatically advanced to the next regular meeting for second reading and public hearing. All other items on the approved consent agenda are passed as final.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

\*a) Regular Meeting Minutes of March 25, 2024

\*b) Regular Meeting Minutes of April 8, 2024

8. SPECIAL ORDERS

- a) The Fairbanks City Council will hear interested citizens concerned with the following alcohol license application for renewal. Public testimony will be taken and limited to three minutes.

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
3381	Bahn Thai Rama Restaurant	Restaurant/Eating Place	Somnuk, LLC	338 Old Steese Highway
4434	Bahn Thai Restaurant	Restaurant/Eating Place	Somnuk, LLC	541 Third Avenue

9. MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT

- a) Special Reports

10. COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12. NEW BUSINESS

\*a) Resolution No. 5116 – A Resolution of the City of Fairbanks Authorizing an Agreement Between the Fairbanks North Star Borough, the City of North Pole, and the City of Fairbanks to Jointly Provide for Economic Development. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

\*b) Resolution No. 5117 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Funds from the United States Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services for the FY2024 Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

\*c) Ordinance No. 6278 – An Ordinance Amending the Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Fairbanks and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1547 by Addressing Non-Union Position Acting Pay. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

13. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

\*a) Fairbanks Diversity Council Meeting Minutes of December 12, 2023

14. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

15. CITY CLERK'S REPORT

16. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION

18. ADJOURNMENT



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, MARCH 25, 2024  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

---

The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date 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:

**Councilmembers Present:**

Jerry Cleworth, Seat A  
Sue Sprinkle, Seat C  
Crystal Tidwell, Seat D  
Lonny Marney, Seat E  
John Ringstad, Seat F

**Absent:**

June Rogers, Seat B (excused)

**Also Present:**

D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk  
Thomas Chard, City Attorney  
Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff  
Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer  
Jake Merritt, HR Director  
Ron Dupee, Police Chief  
Rick Sweet, Deputy Police Chief  
Andrew Coccaro, Fire Chief  
Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely)  
Brynn Butler, Housing Coordinator  
Brenda McFarlane, Crisis Now Coordinator (remotely)

**Ms. Sprinkle**, seconded by **Mr. Cleworth**, moved to EXCUSE Ms. Rogers from the meeting.

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

**INVOCATION**

The invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

**FLAG SALUTATION**

At the request of **Mayor Pruhs**, Chief of Staff Mike Sanders led the flag salutation.

**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.]*

*Thelma Gower*– T. Gower shared that she is a resident of Fairbanks and a retired investment banker who has been involved in over five billion dollars of real estate transactions over her career. She provided the following input on the future development project for the Polaris Building site:

- It would be unwise to view this situation as merely a real estate exercise, given the strategic location of the property.
- What happens next will control the future direction of downtown Fairbanks.
- Will it enhance the experience of living in the downtown area?
- Will it rejuvenate the downtown business scene?
- Will plans take into consideration supply issues that often plague large, hopeful projects?
- While typical bidding processes seem prudent, simply awarding a project of this import to the lowest bidder has a risk of not seeing completion, as initial plans are often unrealistic.
- Environmental considerations must not be ignored. Will the new structure be an energy hog on already-strained energy sources?
- Any potential proposal should be required to prove that it will enhance the quality of life for all residents first and the employment base second.
- The City should only accept proposals that include all cash funding, to avoid a project being delayed or abandoned altogether should financing issues arise.

T. Gower also expressed the importance of any new, large buildings in the City having a net zero draw on existing energy streams by utilizing solar paneling with thermal storage capacities. She shared that this is proven technology in the Interior, and the experts at the UAF Cold Climate Housing Research Center have all the details on the topic.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked for additional information about the solar-powered thermal storage systems. T. Gower explained that large concrete blocks are installed below ground before a structure is erected, with conduits that will connect to solar panels on the building. She stated that the system will convert heat from the sun to energy to be transferred for storage within the concrete block and used throughout the winter to heat the structure.

**Mr. Marney** asked how long the technology has been available. T. Gower estimated 12 to 15 years but encouraged the City to call the Cold Climate Research Center for more information.

*Alex McDonald* – A. McDonald expressed objection to the increase in tobacco tax at the Borough level, which will result in a 40% tax rate for businesses within the City as of July. He recalled many businesses in the Anchorage and Mat-Su areas closing down after their tax rates significantly increased. He reminded the Council that Alaska allows in-state shipping of tobacco purchases, which almost guarantees that customers who live in high tax areas will shift to ordering from locations with lower rates. He noted the impact of lost sales for local businesses and lower tax revenue for the City. A. McDonald stated that his business has been located across the street for about 10 years and he does not like the idea of having to consider moving locations simply to avoid high taxes and going out of business. He shared that in the time since the City increased its tax from 8% to 20% and began taxing vaping products, the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled against the FDA. He explained that the FDA was not reviewing applications for the majority of vaping products, simply denying some without consideration and approving others but with the same classification as cigarettes. He stated that the ruling means that the FDA will now have to go

back and review each product, which may reclassify most vaping products. A. McDonald explained that many products will likely be considered non-taxable but that these determinations will be happening on an ongoing basis, which will make tracking and reporting sales for tax purposes a nightmare. He concluded with details of a recently released study by the FDA which reported a 41% drop in youth vape usage last year, with an overall 61% drop since 2019. He stated that it takes responsible business owners to help those numbers move in the right direction.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked A. McDonald if he orders his products from a local wholesaler. A. McDonald shared that he has to order from out of state. He gave details on how he reports taxes each month.

*Janet Zimmerman (via Zoom)* – J. Zimmerman shared that one week prior, both of her vehicles had been towed by the City due to not being moved in preparation for snow plowing. She stated that she was unaware of the plowing activities, and that morning she went outside to engage with the City staff member to let them know she would be leaving for work shortly thereafter. She reported that the employee gave her five minutes to have the vehicle moved, which she believes she followed, but when she came back, the vehicle was already being towed and the employee had moved on. J. Zimmerman expressed frustration that the vehicle was towed, especially considering that in the half hour she waited for a coworker to come pick her up, none of the machinery had made it to her neighborhood yet. She stated she does not understand why she was not allowed the courtesy of a few extra minutes. She shared that she has never had this kind of issue occur before.

**Ms. Sprinkle** recalled that anytime snow removal is scheduled in her neighborhood, orange cones with signs are placed well in advance to alert citizens. She asked whether that had occurred in this case. J. Zimmerman stated that apparently there were such notices in place, but she had not left her residence the entire weekend and did not see the cones from her window due to a vehicle and trees blocking her view. She added that the Public Works website did not reference her neighborhood as being scheduled for snow removal when she checked in the week prior.

**Mr. Marney** shared that his neighborhood is going to be plowed the following day, and the orange stanchions were in place and very visible more than 24 hours ahead of time.

*Becca Pavlovic (via Zoom)* – B. Pavlovic spoke about a problem property across from where she lives near Rickert Street and 23rd Avenue. She acknowledged that the City is currently helping but expressed frustration with matters only getting worse over the years. She described problems including individuals freezing to death, urinating in public, fighting, constant foot and vehicle traffic, women exiting the building beaten and crying, and more. She shared that she has been in contact with Public Works Director Jeff Jacobson but wanted to bring the issue to the Council's attention also.

**Mr. Ringstad** asked for the property address. B. Pavlovic stated it is at the corner of Rickert and 23rd, and the City contacted property owner who has since installed "No Trespassing" signs.

**Mayor Pruhs** invited B. Pavlovic to stay a while longer, as the issue would be addressed during his comment period of the agenda. He thanked her for bringing the matter to their attention.

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

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA**

**Ms. Tidwell**, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to APPROVE the agenda and consent agenda.

**Ms. Sprinkle** pulled item 12(b), Resolution No. 5112, from the consent agenda.

**Mayor Pruhs** called for objection to the APPROVAL of the agenda, as amended and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

Clerk Snider read the consent agenda, as amended, into the record.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of February 26, 2024

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

b) Regular Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2024

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

c) Special Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2024

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

**SPECIAL ORDERS**

a) The Fairbanks City Council held a public hearing and considered the following alcohol license application for renewal:

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
5169	HooDoo Brewing Company	Brewery	Fairbanks Fermentation, LLC	1951 Fox Avenue

**Ms. Sprinkle**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the alcohol license application for renewal.

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

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

YEAS: Marney, Ringstad, Cleworth, Sprinkle, Tidwell

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Rogers

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- b) The Fairbanks City Council held a public hearing and considered the following marijuana license application for transfer of controlling interest:

Type/License: Retail Marijuana Store, License #17250  
DBA: Pipe and Leaf: Premium Alaskan Cannabis  
Applicant: Pipe and Leaf, LLC (transfer of controlling interest only)  
Location: 3546 Airport Way, Fairbanks

**Ms. Tidwell**, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the marijuana license application for transfer of controlling interest.

**Mayor Pruhs** called for public testimony.

*Hailey Essig* – H. Essig identified herself as one of the owners of the business. She shared that the State recently legalized drive-throughs, and her business has applied for one at this location.

**Mayor Pruhs** asked for clarification on what was changing with the application. H. Essig explained that she was the original full owner, but due to the State's requirement that owners must qualify to receive a PFD to be eligible to hold a marijuana license, she transferred ownership to her father when she left the state due to her husband's work. She clarified that they are now back in Alaska and qualify for ownership again, so this is a transfer of the license back to her.

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated that she was initially worried as she recalled seeing a transfer of ownership for the exact same business not long ago. She thanked H. Essig for attending the meeting to explain.

**Mr. Ringstad** asked for clarification on the addition of the drive-through she mentioned earlier. H. Essig explained that with the new allowance for drive-throughs, she has included that addition in their application to the State.

**Mr. Marney** pointed out that the drive-through was not referenced in the application before the Council. H. Essig clarified that she mentioned it to bring it to the Council's attention. She explained that aside from obtaining the appropriate building permits, the City had no requirement for such an enhancement. She stated that if in the future the Council considered banning drive-throughs, she would hope they recall that it was a \$30,000 investment that she would hate to lose.

**Ms. Sprinkle** asked if this was the first marijuana retail store to have a drive-through option. H. Essig stated she believes there is another one in the borough but outside city limits.

**Mr. Marney** thanked H. Essig for coming to the meeting and speaking with the Council.

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

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO WAIVE PROTEST ON THE MARIJUANA LICENSE APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER OF CONTROLLING INTEREST AS FOLLOWS:



YEAS: Tidwell, Sprinkle, Ringstad, Marney, Cleworth  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: Rogers  
**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- c) The Fairbanks City Council held a public hearing and considered the following marijuana license application for transfer of controlling interest:

Type/License: Retail Marijuana Store, License #30593  
DBA: Pipe and Leaf: Premium Alaskan Cannabis  
Applicant: Pipe and Leaf, LLC (transfer of controlling interest only)  
Location: 899 Old Steese Highway, Fairbanks

**Ms. Sprinkle**, seconded by **Ms. Tidwell**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the marijuana license application for transfer of controlling interest.

**Mayor Pruhs** called for public testimony.

Hailey Essig – H. Essig confirmed that the transfer was similar to the previous one.

**Mr. Ringstad** asked if there were any differences. H. Essig clarified that the location is not conducive for a drive-through, so one is not included within the business plan.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked if Bill St. Pierre was still the owner of the building and if it was true that she was making a \$30,000 investment in a building that she does not own. H. Essig confirmed that was correct but stated that they are currently in a lease-to-own arrangement with Mr. St. Pierre. She stated there are family connections between them which have settled any concerns regarding the investment and overall future ownership plans.

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

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO WAIVE PROTEST ON THE MARIJUANA LICENSE APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER OF CONTROLLING INTEREST AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Ringstad, Marney, Sprinkle, Cleworth, Tidwell  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: Rogers  
**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- d) The Fairbanks City Council held a public hearing and considered the following alcohol license application for transfer of location and DBA name change:

Type/License: Beverage Dispensary, License #4720  
DBA: Corner Point Kitchen  
Applicant: Michael Rasmussen

Location: No Premises  
From Owner: Gallantino's, Inc.  
From DBA: Gallantino's Italian Restaurant  
From Location: 1446 S. Cushman Street, Fairbanks

**Mr. Ringstad**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the alcohol license application for transfer of location and DBA name change.

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

**Ms. Sprinkle** asked for clarification on the application. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that the business is no longer in operation and that the license owner is currently out of state. He added that the owner would like to hold onto the license and put it in a status of "no premises" in order to potentially move it to another location in the future. He clarified that this would place the license on hold, as transferring to a new location would trigger the same process for the Council to review. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if this meant he would not be able to sell alcohol, host parties, or any other activity, while the license was in limbo. **Mayor Pruhs** confirmed that was correct.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked if there was a timeframe for "no premises" licenses to select a location or risk losing the license. Clerk Snider confirmed that there is a minimum number of hours that a license must be in operation during a two-year period and that this "no premises" status was a policy used by the Alcohol and Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) since such a scenario is not addressed in State statute.

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

YEAS: Tidwell, Cleworth, Marney, Ringstad, Sprinkle  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: Rogers  
**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

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

**Mayor Pruhs** addressed the situation brought forth by J. Zimmerman regarding her vehicles being towed and impounded during snow removal. He shared that upon receiving her request to waive the impound fees, he reached out personally to hear her story, then met with associated staff from Public Works and the Engineering Department. **Mayor Pruhs** reported that policies and procedures were followed correctly, that photos taken by staff that morning clearly show that signage was visible, and that the tow truck driver gave an additional 15 minutes for J. Zimmerman to return. He stated that he waived J. Zimmerman's impound fees but not the towing fees. **Mayor Pruhs** reported that the City received \$70,000 from a previous application for funding to be used for a Community Paramedic vehicle. He acknowledged that they have not yet launched the program nor made any hiring decisions, but funding for the vehicle was a big first step. **Mayor Pruhs** shared that he had a 20-minute visit with an elderly, retired electrician, Walter Lord, who

had stopped by with a typed list of known electrical issues he was aware of which fall under the City's purview. He reported that the list was forwarded to the Engineering Department. **Mayor Pruhs** invited Housing and Homeless Coordinator Brynn Butler to address the issue of 23rd Avenue and Rickert Street.

B. Butler shared that she had come across online discussions regarding the property and noted that it has been a problem property for quite some time. She stated that after meeting with the Mayor on the matter, she went about contacting the property owner to initiate some of the efforts that had been acknowledged by B. Pavlovic earlier in the meeting. She reported that in under 24 hours, authorization was received from the owner to post "No Trespassing" signs and for the City to enter the property to remove individuals and clean up the site. **Mayor Pruhs** asked when that would occur. Chief of Staff Sanders responded that the work is scheduled for the following Thursday and will include the Fairbanks Rescue Mission, who will be able to offer services and care for any affected individuals who were occupying the property. B. Butler added that Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) had been notified to tow vehicles that were impeding the right-of-way. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked what was left to be cleaned up. B. Butler explained that the lot is inundated with debris and trash and that the only property that the owner has acknowledged should remain is a small bus and/or trailer. She reported that one individual present is adamant that they have a right to remain on the property, but she has confirmed that they do not.

**Mayor Pruhs** asked Human Resources Director Jake Merritt to provide a City-wide staffing update. J. Merritt reported that 182 of 200.5 total budgeted positions are currently filled, with the largest gaps existing at FPD and the Fairbanks Emergency Communications Center (FECC). He gave a thorough breakdown of the number of applications received and interviews performed for various positions. He provided more details about the FECC's process, as follows:

- In 2022
  - 82 applications were received, and all were invited to take the screening test
  - 45 completed the screening test, which evaluated capacity to work in a team setting
  - 15 (all who passed the previous test) moved forward to the background check stage
  - 13 of those were hired, 5 of which did not make it to 2 years for various reasons
- In 2023
  - 73 applications were received
  - 44 completed the screening test
  - 15 progressed to background checks
  - 6 were hired, 2 of which have since left

J. Merritt also gave current-year numbers for the FECC and added that only 18% of applicants typically make it to the background stage, with one third of those hired not staying long-term.

**Ms. Sprinkle** inquired about the vacant Structural Engineer position. J. Merritt confirmed that when he first came into his position, he had many discussions with the Mayor and Building Official Clem Clooten to discuss the vacancy. He recounted taking down the ad and reposting it to refresh its presence in certain areas, as well as speaking to local businesses to determine how they found qualified individuals for similar jobs. J. Merritt indicated that several companies reported approaching specific students in the UAF Engineering program and entering into hiring

commitments in exchange for educational support. He identified that one challenge with that approach is that the City would not have someone eligible to sign off on student work. He stated that they are now considering headhunting services to help find someone for the position and gave details on how that process works. He affirmed that the City has been doing all the right things, but the applicant pool for that particular job is small, and it is time to solicit help.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked for more information on the screening test used in the hiring process at FECC, noting the high failure rate of applicants. J. Merritt explained that the test comes from a national source and is consistent in the field. FECC Manager Kristi Merideth explained that they have been using the same test for 15-17 years, that many other dispatch centers use the same test, and that questions are generic and are meant to ascertain an applicant's capacity to function in a team environment. **Mr. Cleworth** asked K. Merideth whether she feels comfortable with the test after all these years. K. Merideth stated that she is and that she appreciates being able to view answers on the backend, especially to compare an employee's performance during the training process to how they initially answered questions in the test. She reported that performance is typically consistent with test results, which reaffirms her confidence in the process.

**Mr. Marney** asked if anyone had gone up to the university to meet the Dean of Engineering. J. Merritt stated that he has communicated with the Dean directly, which generated suggestions for different groups that he has since contacted. He noted that at least one of the companies he spoke with has reported similar struggles with filling this same kind of position.

### **COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Ms. Tidwell, Mr. Marney, and Mr. Ringstad** each indicated they had no comments at this time.

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked the Mayor for being on top of all the public testimony from the evening.

**Ms. Sprinkle** reported that she had been invited to speak as a panelist at a recent housing action symposium on topics such as housing insecurity. She stated B. Butler and Ms. Tidwell were also in attendance and that there was a wide range of experts and professionals from across the industry with valuable information pertaining to construction and housing in Fairbanks' unique climate.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a) The Fairbanks City Council considered the below marijuana license application for renewal (POSTPONED from the Regular Meeting of March 11, 2024):

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
11051	Northlink, LLC	Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility	Northlink, LLC	1550 Cushman Street, Suite B

*[Clerk Note: At the March 11, 2024 regular City Council meeting, Mr. Ringstad, seconded by Mr. Marney, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the marijuana license application for renewal, and a public hearing was held. The motion remained on the floor.]*

**Mayor Pruhs** invited the business owner, Travis Fraser, to address the Council.

T. Fraser confirmed that he is the owner of the business as well as the retail store True Dank. He expressed frustration at being called out in the newspaper article which suggested that he has been delinquent with taxes. He stated that he is diligent in paying all obligations to both the State and City. He explained that there was a single instance where a payment to the State was considered late due to an error in a payment via bank transfer. T. Fraser spoke to the difficulty that owners in the marijuana industry have when trying to navigate the constraints with banking. He described having to show the State confirmation of the payments he had made by checks that they had already cashed but not applied to his account.

**Mayor Pruhs** asked T. Fraser if it was accurate to summarize the situation by stating that the State made an error in its accounting of his payments, which resulted in an inaccurate report being shared with the Council; he also asked for confirmation that T. Fraser was in good standing with his City taxes. T. Fraser indicated that was correct and that he pays a lot of money in taxes. He expressed his wish that the Council would have dug a little deeper before drawing conclusions.

**Mayor Pruhs** noted that the police activity report includes activity in the area of 15th Avenue and Cushman Street, even if it has nothing to do with the business. T. Fraser agreed that there are a lot of issues in that area and expressed hope that his tax dollars could help law enforcement's presence in that area continue.

**Mr. Ringstad** concurred that the dispatch report for license applications often includes a lot of incidents that have nothing to do with the actual business. He recalled the Council's concern about the notation from the State regarding payments, and he asked T. Fraser if marijuana business owners still experience the challenges of limited options to make State tax payments. T. Fraser shared that he is fortunate to be one of the few individuals in the pilot program with MAC Federal Credit Union, which was one of the reasons the aforementioned late payment occurred. He noted that overall, it is a benefit to not have to regularly travel to Anchorage with large quantities of cash, but many other business owners must. **Mr. Ringstad** thanked T. Fraser for attending the meeting.

**Mr. Marney** expressed appreciation for T. Fraser's presence.

**Mr. Cleworth** referenced common complaints about the smell of marijuana cultivation in the area of South Cushman Street and the Mitchell Expressway. He acknowledged that this is not the location of Northlink but asked T. Fraser if he was familiar with the problem. T. Fraser indicated that he has his own problems to deal with.

**Mr. Ringstad** stated that he also notices the smell in the area Mr. Cleworth referenced but stated that he does not smell it when he drives past T. Fraser's business.

**Mayor Pruhs** shared that he recently spoke to the other cultivator in that area about the odor issue, and they are checking their filters. T. Fraser agreed that it can be tough to contain the odor, but filters do a pretty good job as long as the carbon filters are changed regularly.

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

YEAS: Cleworth, Marney, Ringstad, Sprinkle, Tidwell  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: Rogers  
**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

### NEW BUSINESS

- a) Resolution No. 5111 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Funds from the Alaska Division of Homeland Security for the FFY2022/2023 State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP). Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- b) Resolution No. 5112 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Funds from the FFY2025 Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Appropriations through the Alaska Municipal League (AML). Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

**Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5112.

**Ms. Sprinkle** asked if the items listed under the Capital Budget section for Public Works were new items. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that they will need to purchase a loader and a backhoe in the next year or two, and that this opportunity to apply for funding from AML would cover a large portion of the cost. **Ms. Sprinkle** indicated that she wants to understand how the resolution connects to the equipment needs and purchase plans in the regular budgeting process. **Mayor Pruhs** suggested the Council view the item like a third-party shopper fulfilling an order who sees an opportunity too good to pass up. **Ms. Sprinkle** stated that she did not know AML did that type of thing. **Mayor Pruhs** noted that he was not aware either until it was brought to his attention by Grants Administrator Sarah Fuerst.

**Mr. Ringstad** referenced the budget book and pointed out that one machine was in the 2024 budget but the other was not. CFO Margarita Bell clarified that the backhoe listed in the budget is different than the one in the resolution and stated that both are needed.

**Mr. Cleworth** noted that while the language refers “congressionally directed” spending through AML, not all communities are members of AML. He asked if those communities are excluded from accessing the funds. CFO Bell confirmed that the funds are available only to AML members. **Mr. Cleworth** expressed disagreement that nonmembers should be discriminated against.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5112 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Ringstad, Tidwell, Sprinkle, Marney, Cleworth  
NAYS: None

ABSENT: Rogers

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5112 APPROVED.

- c) Resolution No. 5113 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Funds from the FFY2025 Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Appropriations for an Interior Regional Stabilization Center. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- d) Ordinance No. 6277 – An Ordinance Authorizing Additional Matching Funds for the Cowles Street Reconstruction Project and Amending the 2024 Capital Budget. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- e) City Tobacco Products Distribution and Excise Tax Discussion

**Mayor Pruhs** explained that it was evident after the last meeting that this was a topic the Council would like to discuss further. He invited City Attorney Thomas Chard to provide a report.

Attorney Chard stated that the City of Fairbanks raised its tobacco tax from 8% to 20% in October 2023, effective January 1, 2024, and the Fairbanks North Star Borough enacted an identical increase in March, effective July 1, 2024. He stated that the impact of the Borough's decision is that wholesalers located within the city will pay a 40% excise tax: 20% to the City and 20% to the Borough. He explained that the Borough's taxing authority flows from the State Constitution through the legislature and that in some cases the Borough exempts certain taxation inside the city, such as alcohol tax. He noted that no such exemption exists in Borough code for tobacco taxes.

**Mr. Ringstad** pointed out that before the two changes, both entities had a rate of 8%, so businesses within the city were paying 16%, while those outside the city were paying 8%.

**Ms. Sprinkle** suggested that Borough Assemblymember Scott Crass, who was attending via Zoom, may have additional information. **Mayor Pruhs** asked if S. Crass would give an overview of the Borough ordinance, discuss how the ordinance affects the City, and take some questions.

S. Crass stated that the Borough's rate had not changed since 2004, and he had initially discussed the issue with Mr. Marney with the hope of crafting a creative solution. He noted the challenge that only 3.5% of wholesale tobacco distribution fell outside of the cities of Fairbanks and North Pole and explained that there were legal distinctions between excise taxes and sales taxes, such as the bed tax and alcohol tax.

**Mayor Pruhs** stated that the City received an additional \$100,000 in January 2024 which, because of the tax cap, will provide relief on real estate taxes. He indicated that significant changes may increase property taxes, which will necessitate a serious conversation with the Borough.

S. Crass discussed the Laffer Curve, considerations they took to determine the maximum level of taxation that would not impact revenues, and cited the inelastic nature of tobacco purchases due to the addictive nature of the product. He stated that the drop in usage is anticipated to be minimal compared to the increase in revenue but that income was not the primary reason for the change. He cited statistics of youth vaping and tobacco usage and asserted that raising the tax served mainly to combat those trends. He added that other state and national entities have highlighted increasing taxes as a proven lever to drive down the overall use of nicotine products.

**Mr. Ringstad** expressed concern that while only 3.5% of purchases occur outside the cities of Fairbanks and North Pole, that will likely increase dramatically as customers take their business outside of the cities. He pointed out that this would have zero effect on the Borough's revenue but massive repercussions to the cities.

S. Crass acknowledged the misunderstandings that have arisen, such as the notion that the cheapest place to buy smokes in town would be the gas station across from the largest high school in Fairbanks; he stated that is not how the excise tax works. S. Crass pointed out that 88% of the wholesale distribution occurs through larger retailers such as Costco and Fred Meyer. He shared that the discussions he has had with businesses has centered around loss of business to online sales.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked if the reason the Borough has some taxes stacked but not others is due to Borough code provisions or those of the State. Attorney Chard explained that according to his research, the State provides discretion to the Borough to choose whether or not to exempt both sales and excise taxes within municipalities. **Mr. Cleworth** asked S. Crass if he would be willing to sponsor a Borough ordinance to exempt the tobacco excise tax within the City, making it the same as the alcohol and bed taxes. S. Crass noted that the overall rate is still lower than the average levels across the state in other larger cities in Alaska. He indicated that he would be interested in exempting a portion but not the full amount, since almost 90% of the revenue the Borough would collect is within the city. **Mr. Cleworth** expressed appreciation to S. Crass for sharing his view but admitted that he wished his answer was different. He shared that the Council had similar concerns about flight [the potential loss of sales to online suppliers], which is why they settled on 20% after much deliberation. He stated that a 40% rate is extremely high for businesses.

**Mr. Ringstad** agreed that the Council had discussed how high was too high. He noted that a jump from a combined rate of 16% to 28% was tolerable but not 16% to 40%. He stated he believes that people will turn to online purchasing, which will result in lost revenue for the City and Borough.

**Mr. Marney** thanked S. Crass for his participation and acknowledged that he was only recently elected to the Borough Assembly. He discussed the history between the Council and Assembly and the Council's attempt to reach out to address certain issues in the past. He recalled former Assemblymembers accepting the City's invitation to attend Council meetings and expressed a wish that there had been more conversations regarding the ordinance and its impacts before it was introduced. **Mr. Marney** expressed his dismay that the Borough spent thousands of dollars on the Downtown 2040 Plan then took action that harms businesses within the city and drives sales to businesses outside city boundaries. He stated that compels him to not vote in support of the Plan.

**Mayor Pruhs** thanked S. Crass for taking time to discuss these difficult issues with the Council.



**Mr. Cleworth** indicated that he had further thoughts on the matter to share at a later time.

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated that she does not believe it is the end of the topic. She suggested that the Council may want to discuss drafting a resolution requesting that the Borough drop its rate. She recounted the work done to determine 20% as an acceptable target. **Mayor Pruhs** spoke to the significance of Mr. Marney's comments regarding the Downtown Plan and the impact of Borough decisions on businesses within the City. He indicated that this is an eye-opening experience. **Ms. Sprinkle** expressed her belief that S. Crass did not approach the issue in a damaging way and added that he is a thoughtful person. She stated that the Council should do more work on the issue.

**Mr. Ringstad** shared that he was not overly impressed with the Downtown Plan to begin with and that he is uncomfortable with the Borough outlining what the City should be doing without the City being involved at the front end. He highlighted this as another example of poor communication between the two entities, which is not good for the larger community. **Mr. Marney** agreed and expressed frustration with the difference in how the two groups approach each other and stated that there needs to be more conversation between the Council and the Assembly. He stated that the most important thing is what is best for the citizens of the community.

**Ms. Tidwell** conveyed her hope that the City and the Borough could come together down the road to figure out the problem. She confirmed that the issue of stacked taxes was never identified during the Council's discussions and that it was not her intention to see it jump to 40%.

**Mayor Pruhs** agreed with the sentiment that the City should have been approached about something that impacts businesses within city limits so drastically.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Mr. Cleworth** discussed a recent email from the Chief of Police confirming the return of Officer Elzey for a summer assignment. He referenced the retirement of Officer Laska, speaking favorably of his work for the City, and asked if there was any additional information about the hint of another retired officer returning on a temporary basis. Chief of Police Ron Dupee shared that they have a meeting on Thursday to discuss specifics. **Mr. Cleworth** explained that the Downtown Plan has been in the works for about seven years, with Ms. Sprinkle and himself being involved heavily in the early stages, but the meetings seemed to stop. He stated that a consultant was brought in who met with the working group a couple times, but eventually the work and focus shifted to the consultant. He described the Plan as being fine overall and reminded the Council that it was drafted intentionally to not get too far into the weeds. **Mr. Cleworth** acknowledged that some of the items Mayor Pruhs put forth had been incorporated but that the Council ultimately has the opportunity to revise components that affect the City. He stated that the Assembly would not be able to pass a version of the plan that differs from what the Council approves and that they will have another bite at the apple within the next month or two. **Mr. Cleworth** suggested that the Council might want the Borough Assembly to consider changing its Code to treat the excise tax the same way it treats sales taxes. He reported that the Assembly's vote on the issue was close – just five to four – so there may be Assembly members willing to consider a different approach. **Mr. Cleworth** recalled that Assemblymember Lajiness had proposed an amendment to keep the Borough's rate at 8%, but it failed. He stated that he believes the Council should encourage the Assembly to revisit the issue

and keep its Code consistent between all taxes. He asked others if they agreed. All members present came to a consensus that the sentiment suggested by Mr. Cleworth could be conveyed.

**Mr. Ringstad** indicated that he had no further report or comments.

**Ms. Tidwell** reported having attended the housing symposium over the weekend and that Ms. Sprinkle and B. Butler did a great job as panelists during the event.

**Mr. Marney** asked to have his name added as a sponsor to Resolution No. 5113. **Ms. Tidwell** echoed the same request.

**Ms. Sprinkle** shared positive comments from a citizen who praised the snow removal work by Public Works this year and stated that she agreed with the citizen.

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

Clerk Snider thanked the Councilmembers who were able to attend the kickoff session of the Citizen Engagement Academy. She reported that Alayna Nelson, the new Records Manager, will start working April 1 and invited Councilmembers to stop by and say hello.

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

Attorney Chard reported that the Attorney's Office was elated to have the new Legal Secretary, Nina Victorino, start working. He spoke about her experience with the court system and local law offices. He also encouraged Councilmembers to stop by to say hello and shared that he will provide details the following day regarding a going away event for the outgoing secretary, Ingrid Hinde.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ENTER Executive Session to discuss Fairbanks Firefighters Union (FFU) Labor Negotiation Strategy and 109 5th Avenue Continued Abatement Procedures.

**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.

- a) 109 5th Avenue Continued Abatement Procedures (*entered at 8:20 p.m.*)
- b) Fairbanks Firefighters Union Labor Negotiation Strategy (*entered at 9:02 p.m.*)

**Mr. Cleworth** brought the City Council out of the Executive Session, noting that the City Council met in Executive Session to discuss FFU Labor Negotiation Strategy and 109 5th Avenue Continued Abatement Procedures. He affirmed that direction was given, but no action was taken.

The regular meeting resumed at 9:51 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

---

DAVID PRUHS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

---

D. DANYIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: CC



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, APRIL 8, 2024  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

---

The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date 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 Councilmembers in attendance:

Councilmembers Present: Jerry Cleworth, Seat A  
June Rogers, Seat B (remotely)  
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  
Thomas Chard, City Attorney  
Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff  
Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer  
Ron Dupee, Police Chief  
Nathan Werner, Police Captain  
Andrew Cocco, Fire Chief  
Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely)  
Brynn Butler, Housing Coordinator (remotely)

### **INVOCATION**

The invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

### **FLAG SALUTATION**

At the request of Mayor Pruhs, **Ms. Tidwell** led the flag salutation.

### **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.]*

Robert Shields – R. Shields referenced a Resolution from 2023 that supported further economic development in downtown Fairbanks and shared that a local developer with over 20 years of experience will be up later in the month for the 6th Annual Regenerative Planet Summit. He reported that the Plumbers & Pipefitters Union Local 375 is sponsoring the summit, and they will be hosting Daryl Oster to speak about new technologies that could provide economic development

in Alaska, especially around transportation. R. Shields recognized that many of the suggestions from the organization he represents, the Alliance for Reason and Knowledge, were included in the draft plan for the Polaris Building site project, and he expressed a desire to know how they can advocate for those ideas to be included in the final cut. He explained that their interest in the future of the site is tied to the context of how Fairbanks looks when it prospers and thrives and to how they hope to see that again. R. Shields affirmed their commitment to invest in those goals by bringing in speakers and securing agreements with various entities who are interested in supporting their vision for the community. He invited the Council to attend the upcoming summit and requested that a Council work session be scheduled to share about the various opportunities, projects, ideas, and challenges they are involved with, specifically their vision for the Polaris site.

Victor Buberger – V. Buberger shared that upon his return from a recent trip, he had a medical issue with his heart which caused him to miss the last meeting. He reported that while in the hospital, he had conversations with several nurses and attendants, many of whom he perceived to be military spouses, about their thoughts on the GARS intersection. V. Buberger indicated that their responses were overwhelmingly negative and that the number of accidents in that area had dramatically increased. He acknowledged that this was a State project and claimed that he has yet to meet one person who likes the new intersection. He questioned whether the \$40MM cost was worth it and spoke against the project slated for the Steese Highway and Johansen Expressway intersection.

Bill Wright, Explore Fairbanks Director of Tourism and Meeting Sales – B. Wright gave an update on his work and shared about the various events they have hosted with groups representing numerous travel programs around the world. He listed several trade shows that his team had attended across the country to promote travel to the Interior. He shared that 2024 is off to a great start and that there is an anticipating an increase in travel capacity at the airport as certain routes have returned or been added. B. Wright discussed both occupancy and daily rates of local hotels. He reported that the “Today Show” had a segment earlier in the day highlighting the solar eclipse and other cosmic phenomena, and they included a reference to the northern lights in Fairbanks.

**Ms. Sprinkle** asked if Condor Airlines was one of the companies resuming routes to Fairbanks. B. Wright stated that unfortunately they are not. He added that Condor’s representatives have cited the challenge of making it economical for the airlines, though three flights to Anchorage will still occur in the summer. He indicated that some of their marketing is targeted to those travelers with the hope that they will make their way to Fairbanks while visiting Alaska.

David van den Berg, Downtown Association (DTA) of Fairbanks Executive Director – D. van den Berg expressed his organization’s support for Resolution No. 5115. He indicated that they view the City’s increase of the tobacco tax as a reasonable action to ensure stable revenue in order to budget for vital services. He affirmed that the DTA believes the request that the Borough exempt the tax within the City makes a lot of sense for the reasons expressed in the resolution.

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked D. van den Berg for the support and asked when the summer solstice celebration will be held. D. van den Berg stated it will be Saturday, June 22 from noon to midnight.

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

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA**

**Ms. Sprinkle**, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to APPROVE the agenda and consent agenda.

**Ms. Sprinkle** pulled item 12(b), Resolution No. 5115, from the consent agenda.

**Mayor Pruhs** called for objection to the APPROVAL of the agenda, as amended and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

Clerk Snider read the consent agenda, as amended, into the record.

**SPECIAL ORDERS**

a) The Fairbanks City Council held a public hearing and considered the following alcohol license application for renewal:

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
5780	Jazz Bistro "Havana Nights"	Restaurant/Eating Place	Bluenote Create, Inc.	529 4th Avenue

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

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

**Ms. Sprinkle** asked what "no match found" meant in the attached report. Clerk Snider explained that that indicates there were no records for calls in FPD's records for this location and timeframe.

**Mr. Marney** noted that this may be the first time he has seen zero entries on a report.

**Ms. Rogers** stated that this business exemplifies the ideals they often discuss about a refreshed downtown environment with boutique businesses. She expressed support for their presence and efforts to add to the downtown scene.

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

YEAS: Tidwell, Cleworth, Marney, Ringstad, Sprinkle, Rogers  
NAYS: None

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

**MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT**

**Mayor Pruhs** thanked the Public Works and Engineering departments for their work to make the Polaris Building Commencement of Destruction event and celebration a positive experience. He reported that they have begun work to draft package options for homeowners in the Island Homes subdivision in anticipation of the large project to redo roadways and utilities in that area beginning

in 2025. He recognized Mr. Marney's suggestion regarding public outreach as the process comes together. **Mayor Pruhs** stated that a recent newspaper article highlighted that the MACS transit center on 5th Avenue and Cushman Street experiences frequent calls to the police and claimed that response times can be from 20 to 30 minutes. He shared that, upon his request, the Chief of Police and FECC Manager provided a report for calls to that location which turned out to be an eye-opener. **Mayor Pruhs** indicated that by the typical definition, the property would be considered a nuisance property, with 103 calls during the timeframe of the search. He clarified that a majority of the calls were for trespassing issues, with only 10 calls classified as critical priority. He noted that the average total response time for critical calls was eight minutes, while trespassing and other non-critical call response times were 10 to 15 minutes. **Mayor Pruhs** pointed out that the location has its own security, so the concern is whether those personnel can adequately keep patrons safe. He acknowledged that his own private business has an office across the street from that property, and it is clear that problems are persistent. He expressed hope that the Borough could get more security presence at the transit center and affirmed that FPD is answering calls promptly.

### **COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Ms. Tidwell** indicated that she had no comments at this time.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated that like V. Buberger, he is baffled by the GARS intersection and noted that he was not involved with FAST Planning when it was being deliberated. He confirmed that now, as members of that committee, he and Mayor Pruhs have taken a good look at the planned updates to the Steese intersection, including video simulations of the new traffic flows. He expressed his belief that it makes sense and was well done and stated that he has faith in that project.

**Ms. Rogers** thanked the Council for its support as she goes through a difficult time with illness. She affirmed that while Zoom is a great benefit, in-person attendance is important to her.

**Mr. Marney** shared that he, Ms. Sprinkle, Chief of Staff Sanders, and Clerk Snider attended the retirement celebration for Sergeant Laska at FPD and gave recognition for his years of service.

**Mr. Ringstad** expressed regret that he was out of town for the Polaris Building event but was glad to hear that his granddaughter and her friends attended and saw the inside of the building for the first time. He wished success for the project. He referenced the issues at the MACS Transit Center and shared that he had recently driven past the location and witnessed a security and uniformed officer dealing with an unruly individual. He agreed that it is something that needs to be looked at.

**Ms. Sprinkle** stated she enjoyed attending the Polaris Building event and Sgt. Laska's retirement event. She expressed gratitude for things going on in the city and for the opportunity to serve.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a) Ordinance No. 6277 – An Ordinance Authorizing Additional Matching Funds for the Cowles Street Reconstruction Project and Amending the 2024 Capital Budget. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

**Mr. Ringstad**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6277.

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

**Mr. Cleworth** expressed concern at the potential increase of the project from \$7.2MM to \$15.8MM since it is currently unknown where the cost will fall. He proposed that the Council approve the ordinance and see what happens when soil testing is complete. He suggested that if it turns out they will need to spend millions of dollars to ship away contaminated dirt, then they should instead at least consider shifting funds to the other Cowles Street project where the soil is not an issue. He requested that Mayor Pruhs come back to the Council with updated costs, once they are known, so the Council can review project feasibility.

**Mr. Ringstad** echoed Mr. Cleworth's concerns and concurred with his reasoning.

**Ms. Sprinkle** indicated that she was under the impression that there were two pieces to the project, but an email from City Engineer Robert Pristash and this ordinance seemed to suggest otherwise. **Mr. Cleworth** explained that he understands there to be two phases to the project, and the budget only includes what is known as Phase I. He stated he believes the ordinance only refers to Phase I but acknowledged that may not be the case. Others indicated that they thought it was combined.

**Mayor Pruhs** acknowledged that it is uncommon for the City to put something out there without an exact cost. He confirmed that the ordinance would allow them to go forward but assured the Council that it would review the item once the numbers were clarified. He stated that the location has been problematic and agreed that the environmental unknowns and costs are worrisome.

**Mr. Ringstad** asked for clarification on the work being performed in the coming summer, whether it would be only soil testing, and what funds have already been appropriated. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that the confusion about the project is due to its complicated and multi-faceted nature.

**Mr. Marney** pointed out that this is the second time the City has run into the issue of not being able to handle hazmat materials in-state. He noted that the military has completely different allowances as well as issues with contamination and asked if this is something they should be communicating with Alaska senators about. **Mayor Pruhs** shared that when they encountered the contamination issues with the Polaris Building in December 2022, he spoke for an hour with the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in Anchorage. He stated that the Commissioner indicated that since taking office, he has made an increased effort to pursue the permitting process for EPA approval for an in-state disposal site. **Mayor Pruhs** reported that he also discussed the topic with Senator Murkowski at the event on Friday, and she affirmed that they recognize the significance of the challenge and are working on it.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6277 AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6277 ADOPTED.



## NEW BUSINESS

- a) Resolution No. 5114 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Funds from the Alaska Highway Safety Office for FFY2025 DUI Traffic Enforcement Unit. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- b) Resolution No. 5115 – A Resolution Requesting the Fairbanks North Star Borough Consider Exempting Its Tax of Tobacco Products Within the City of Fairbanks. Introduced by Councilmembers Cleworth, Sprinkle, and Marney.

**Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5115.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated that one of the problems is that the sponsor of the Borough's ordinance originally agreed with the position that the tax increase should exempt businesses within the city, and he went into the Assembly meeting under the impression that there would be an amendment to that effect. He pointed out that no such amendment was made, that another one was attempted but voted down, and when it came to the main motion, it only passed by a vote of 5-4. He indicated that the frustration is over signals being given, both to a Councilmember as well as a business owner, over anticipated adjustments that never came.

**Mayor Pruhs** explained that what he finds worrisome is that for possibly the first time in the history of the City and Borough, without any preceding discussion, one body has taken an action which creates a significant economic imbalance for businesses within the City versus those outside it. He expressed concern as to whether this might happen again either with future taxes or changes to the existing parameters of taxation on products and services such as alcohol, marijuana, and room rentals. **Mayor Pruhs** recounted the claim that the ordinance was primarily intended to combat underage tobacco and vaping usage, while simultaneously creating a situation where the cheapest place in town to purchase tobacco products will be at the gas station across from West Valley and Hutchison high schools. He stated that it does not seem that the Assembly went through the process soundly and that there are consequences for doing so, citing a loss of trust. **Mayor Pruhs** stated that Borough Mayor Bryce Ward had the option but chose not to veto the ordinance, despite the close vote. He recounted a situation from a few years ago where the Borough wanted to adjust the hours for alcohol sales because one business in the Goldstream Valley, outside the city, wanted their package store to be able to open earlier and close later. He reported that the police were in opposition for multiple reasons, but the Assembly still passed it despite vehement opposition from the City. **Mayor Pruhs** expressed the hope that the Borough will recognize the issues at hand, take the City's resolution seriously, and reconsider the action taken in March.

**Mr. Marney** stated that he has been thinking about the issue a lot and would simply like to ask the Borough Mayor and Assemblymembers what they would do if the shoe was on the other foot.

**Ms. Tidwell, Ms. Rogers, Mr. Ringstad, and Mayor Pruhs** each asked to be added as sponsors.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5115 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Ringstad, Tidwell, Rogers, Sprinkle, Marney, Cleworth  
NAYS: None  
**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution  
No. 5115 APPROVED.

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

- a) Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes of December 5, 2023  
ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA
- b) Clay Street Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes of March 6, 2024  
ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA
- c) Memorandum Regarding Fairbanks Police Department Budgeted Positions  
ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Ms. Tidwell** stated that she had no committee reports, that the Polaris celebration was a great event, and that she looks forward to hearing the ideas people have for that property.

**Mr. Marney** reminded everyone that school will be out soon, and the speed limit in most neighborhoods is 20 mph. He urged citizens to exercise caution.

**Mr. Ringstad** indicated that he had no further report or comments.

**Ms. Sprinkle** shared that there would be a Chena Riverfront Commission meeting in a few weeks.

**Ms. Rogers** echoed Mr. Marney's call for caution and described situations of low tree branches covering speed limit signs in her neighborhood. She asked if Public Works could address the issue. She spoke about issues with the Borough and stated that until they can all work together in a way that helps the community prosper, neither entity will be as successful as they otherwise could be.

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked Clerk Snider and City Attorney Chard for helping get Resolution No. 5115 finalized in time for the meeting. He expressed hope that Ms. Rogers would be able to return soon.

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

Clerk Snider stated she had nothing to report.

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

Attorney Chard stated he had nothing to report.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to ENTER Executive Session to discuss Fairbanks Firefighters Union (FFU) 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.

a) Fairbanks Firefighters Union Labor Negotiation Strategy (*entered at 7:32 p.m.*)

**Mr. Cleworth** brought the City Council out of the Executive Session, noting that the City Council met in Executive Session to discuss FFU Labor Negotiation Strategy. He affirmed that direction was given to the negotiating team, but no action was taken.

The regular meeting resumed at 8:12 p.m.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated that he and Ms. Sprinkle would like to have the Cowles Street project included on the agenda for the next work session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Ms. Tidwell**, 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 8:13 p.m.

---

DAVID PRUHS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

---

D. DANYIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: CC



800 Cushman Street  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Telephone (907) 459-6702  
Fax (907) 459-6710

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Pruhs and City Council Members

FROM: D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk 

SUBJECT: Alcohol License Renewal Applications

DATE: April 17, 2024

Notice has been received from the State Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) for the following alcohol license renewal applications:

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
3381	Bahn Thai Rama Restaurant	Restaurant/Eating Place	Somnuk, LLC	338 Old Steese Highway
4434	Bahn Thai Restaurant	Restaurant/Eating Place	Somnuk, LLC	541 Third Avenue

Pursuant to FGC Sec. 14-178 the Council must determine whether to protest alcohol license renewal applications after holding a public hearing.

The Police Department has included a call report for the locations listed above, but **there are no department-recommended protests** for these alcohol license renewal applications.

# CITY OF FAIRBANKS PUBLIC SAFETY

## Event List with Report Numbers

Bahn Thai - Old Steese

Report #	Call Time	Nature	Location	Prime Unit	Disp.	Close Time
	03/01/2024 10:35:37	FOUND PROPERTY -	338 OLD STEESE HWY	07	NRP	03/01/2024 11:33:57

Total Number of Events Listed: 1

# CITY OF FAIRBANKS PUBLIC SAFETY

## Event List with Report Numbers

Bahn Thai 541 Third Ave

Report #	Call Time	Nature	Location	Prime Unit	Disp.	Close Time
	02/10/2024 11:13:52	TRESPASS/UNWANTED -	541 THIRD AVE	S39	NRP	02/10/2024 11:26:42
	01/15/2024 13:13:18	SUSP CIRCUMSTANCES -	541 THIRD AVE	O6	NRP	01/15/2024 13:31:28
	01/07/2024 00:00:51	TRESPASS/UNWANTED -	541 THIRD AVE	O37	NRP	01/07/2024 00:17:27
	01/02/2024 21:24:46	TRESPASS/UNWANTED -	541 THIRD AVE	O50	NRP	01/02/2024 21:50:56
	04/21/2023 20:00:41	HARASSMENT - BRAVO	541 THIRD AVE	S12	NRP	04/21/2023 20:44:32

Total Number of Events Listed: **5**

**RESOLUTION NO. 5116**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS AUTHORIZING AN  
AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH, THE  
CITY OF NORTH POLE, AND THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS TO JOINTLY  
PROVIDE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**WHEREAS**, A.S. § 29.35.110(c) authorizes second-class boroughs, including the Fairbanks North Star Borough (Borough), to expend tax revenue collected on an areawide basis for economic development if there is an agreement in place with a city located in the borough to cooperatively or jointly provide for economic development; and

**WHEREAS**, A.S. § 29.35.110(c) was recently amended to include using revenue from other sources of funding including grants; and

**WHEREAS**, AS § 29.71.800 defines economic development as "an action intended to result in an outcome that causes an increase in, or avoids a decrease of economic activity, gross domestic product, or the tax base;" and

**WHEREAS**, Borough Resolution No. 2023-27 supports areawide cooperation and the joint provision of economic development stating that it is in the best interest of all borough citizens for the Borough to be able to spend tax revenue on economic development that will benefit the entire borough; that the cities of Fairbanks and North Pole and the Borough have been operating under an agreement signed by the Mayors of each jurisdiction since 2004; that economies are not bound by governmental boundaries; and that regardless of the source of the revenue, the Borough is not interested in acquiring an areawide power of economic development which would prohibit the City of North Pole or the City of Fairbanks from exercising economic development within their boundaries; and

**WHEREAS**, Borough Resolution No. 2023-27 further states that the Borough has tracked areawide economic indicators since the 1970's through the Community Research Quarterly publication; that it is a resource for the exchange of local economic information between and amongst local businesses and municipal, state, and federal governments; and that the Economic Development Commission is a necessary and integral part of the coordination of economic development activities of the Borough and participates in specific economic development projects as they are proposed; and

**WHEREAS**, approval of the proposed Memorandum of Agreement does not amend or modify the role of the Economic Development Commission nor does it infringe on, or eliminate, the appropriating power of the Borough Assembly, North Pole City Council, or Fairbanks City Council.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Fairbanks authorizes the Mayor to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Fairbanks North Star Borough and City of North Pole to jointly provide for economic development and authorizing each

municipality to:

1. Apply for, receive, and administer grants.
2. Take other action to develop, encourage, study, or finance economic development projects that benefit the City of Fairbanks and the entire borough, such as:
  - a. Supporting economic development organizations that support key industries outlined in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) such as the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation and Explore Fairbanks.
  - b. Promoting, supporting, and facilitating projects for key economic industries as identified in the CEDS.
3. Develop and maintain key economic indicators and metrics to be used for informing economic development decisions for the City of Fairbanks and the entire borough.
4. Create and disseminate information on the economic status of the City of Fairbanks and entire borough in support of economic development actions.

**PASSED AND APPROVED** this \_\_\_\_ day of April 2024.

---

**David Pruhs, City Mayor**

YEAS:  
NAYS:  
ABSENT  
APPROVED:

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

---

D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

---

Thomas A. Chard II, City Attorney



**ATTACHMENT TO  
CITY OF FAIRBANKS RESOLUTION NO. 5116**

1           AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS, CITY OF NORTH POLE,  
2           AND THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH TO JOINTLY PROVIDE  
3           FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
4

5           WHEREAS, AS 29.35.110(c) authorizes a second-class borough to expend  
6 tax revenue collected on an areawide basis for economic development if an agreement is  
7 in place with a city located in the borough; and  
8

9           WHEREAS, AS 29.35.110(c) was recently amended to include using revenue  
10 from other source of funds to include grants; and  
11

12           WHEREAS, The City of Fairbanks, the City of North Pole, and the Borough  
13 have been operating under an agreement signed by the Mayors of each jurisdiction since  
14 2004; and  
15

16           WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of all borough citizens for the Borough  
17 to be able to spend tax revenue on economic development that will benefit the entire  
18 borough, regardless of the source of the revenue; and  
19

20           WHEREAS, Economies are not necessarily bound by governmental  
21 boundaries; and  
22

23           WHEREAS, The Borough is not interested in acquiring an areawide power  
24 of economic development, which would prohibit the City of Fairbanks and the City of  
25 North Pole from exercising economic development within their boundaries; and  
26

27           NOW THEREFORE that the parties agree to jointly provide for borough-wide  
28 economic development and authorizing each municipality to:  
29

- 30           1. Apply for, receive, and administer grants.

- 31 2. Take other action to develop, encourage, study, or finance economic  
32 development projects that benefit the entire borough, such as:  
33 a. Support economic development organizations that support key  
34 industries outlined in the Comprehensive Economic Development  
35 Strategy (CEDS), such as the Fairbanks Economic Development  
36 Corporation and Explore Fairbanks.  
37 b. Promote, support, and facilitate projects for key economic industries as  
38 identified in the CEDS.  
39 3. Develop and maintain key economic indicators and metrics to be used for  
40 informing economic development decisions for the entire borough.  
41 4. Create and disseminate information on the economic status of the entire  
42 borough in support of economic development actions.

43  
44 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands this \_\_\_\_\_ DAY  
45 OF \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_.

46  
47  
48 \_\_\_\_\_  
49 Bryce Ward, Mayor  
50 Fairbanks North Star Borough

51  
52 \_\_\_\_\_  
53 David Pruhs, Mayor  
54 City of Fairbanks

55 ATTEST:

56  
57 \_\_\_\_\_  
58 April Trickey, MMC  
59 Borough Clerk

57 \_\_\_\_\_  
58 Michael Welch, Mayor  
59 City of North Pole

**RESOLUTION NO. 5117**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS TO APPLY FOR FUNDS FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES FOR THE FY2024 LAW ENFORCEMENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACT**

**WHEREAS**, the United States Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services offers funding to improve the delivery of and access to mental health and wellness services for law enforcement officers through the implementation of peer support, training, family resources, suicide prevention, and other promising practices for wellness programs; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Fairbanks Police Department wishes to increase its ability to provide services for officers' emotional, mental, and physical health to ensure preventative effects, thus increasing retention of healthy employees; and

**WHEREAS**, the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act provides an award limit of \$200,000 with no matching requirement; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Fairbanks Police Department wishes to request \$200,000 to fund activities in three areas: project management and implementation, training, and mental and physical health support.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council that the Mayor or his designee is authorized to execute any and all documents required for requesting funds on behalf of the City for the FY2024 Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act grant.

**PASSED and APPROVED this 22nd Day of April 2024.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**David Pruhs, City Mayor**

AYES:  
NAYS:  
ABSENT:  
APPROVED:

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas A. Chard II, City Attorney

**CITY OF FAIRBANKS**  
**FISCAL NOTE**

**I. REQUEST:**

Ordinance or Resolution No: 5117

Abbreviated Title: FY2024 Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA)

Department(s): Police Department

Does the adoption of this ordinance or resolution authorize:

1) additional costs beyond the current adopted budget? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X

2) additional support or maintenance costs? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X

If yes, what is the estimate? see below

3) additional positions beyond the current adopted budget? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X

If yes, how many positions? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, type of positions? \_\_\_\_\_ (F - Full Time, P - Part Time, T - Temporary)

**II. FINANCIAL DETAIL:**

PROJECTS:	Consultant	Training	Other Costs	Total
Peer Support Consultant	\$104,000			\$104,000
Peer Support Training for Officers		\$10,000		\$10,000
Physical evaluations (\$800 per officer)			\$35,200	\$35,200
Mental health costs for officers			\$50,800	\$50,800
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$104,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$86,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

FUNDING SOURCE:	Consultant	Training	Other Costs	Total
LEMHWA (Federal Funds)	\$104,000	\$10,000	\$86,000	\$200,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$104,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$86,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

The budget will cover the 24-month performance period of the grant. The Peer Support Consultant will develop processes and procedures to assist officers with mental health programs when joining the department and throughout their tenure based on created incident thresholds. It is anticipated that by year two of the program officers will be utilizing procedures and incur mental health costs for reimbursement, these costs will be dictated by the created policy. The department must create a sustainability plan for costs after the federal funding period lapses.

Reviewed by Finance Department:

Initial SF

Date 4/17/2024

**ORDINANCE NO. 6278**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS AND THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS (IBEW) LOCAL 1547 BY ADDRESSING NON-UNION POSITION ACTING PAY**

**WHEREAS**, Ordinance No. 6254 ratified a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the City of Fairbanks and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1547, effective January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2026; and

**WHEREAS**, the CBA addressed acting in other IBEW positions of greater responsibilities, but it did not address acting in non-union positions of greater responsibilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chief of Staff, Chief Financial Officer, Human Resources Director, and Risk/Purchasing Agent are non-union positions that would likely be backfilled during a prolonged absence by an IBEW member; and

**WHEREAS**, IBEW members acting in union positions of greater responsibility are paid at the higher position's 100% step for the additional workload; and

**WHEREAS**, the City and the IBEW agree that IBEW members acting in non-union positions of greater responsibility should be compensated for the additional workload; and

**WHEREAS**, the non-union positions' pay is not included in the CBA Schedule A, does not have a pay scale, and is typically set based on the individual's performance and experience; and

**WHEREAS**, the City and the IBEW agree that paying IBEW members an additional 10% for hours they are acting in a non-union position of greater responsibility is fair; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Fairbanks and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1547 agree to amend the CBA to address the situation described above.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS, ALASKA, as follows:**

**SECTION 1.** The Letter of Agreement amending the current CBA between the City of Fairbanks and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, attached as Exhibit A, is approved.

**SECTION 2.** The effective date of this ordinance is five days after adoption.

---

**David Pruhs, Mayor**

AYES:  
NAYS:  
ABSENT:  
ADOPTED:

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

---

D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

---

Thomas A. Chard II, City Attorney

**Exhibit A to Ordinance No. 6278**


Letter of Agreement  
between the  
City of Fairbanks  
and the  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1547

**16.2.1 – Compensation for Service as Acting Department Head**

When a Department Head is on personal leave and unavailable for more than 12 hours to physically respond to the work if needed, another employee will be appointed by the Mayor or Mayor's designee as Acting Department Head. The added duties of this assignment include performance of all duties of the Department Head, including appearance at inter-agency meetings and taking responsibility for overall operations of the Department. While serving as Acting Department Head, the employee will receive the Range E rate of pay for the Department Head. While serving in an acting role for a non-union leadership role the employee will be paid an additional 10%. All overtime will be at the employee's regular rate of pay, as Department Heads are not eligible for overtime. Any leave cash out will be at the employee's regular rate.

---

David Pruhs  
Mayor  
City of Fairbanks



---

Naomi Hewitt  
Business Representative  
IBEW Local 1547



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA  
DECEMBER 12, 2023, 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.



HELD VIA [ZOOM WEBINAR](#) AND AT  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

**Chair Juanita Webb** called the regular meeting of the **Fairbanks Diversity Council (FDC)** to order at 5:32 p.m. on the above date. Attendance was as follows:

**Members Present (in person):**

Juanita Webb, Chair, Seat D  
Marsha Oss, Seat E  
Dorothy Shockley, Seat F  
Jonathan Bagwill, Seat G  
June Rogers, City Council Member

**Members Present (Zoom):**

Timothy Ledna, Seat A  
Richard Basarab, Seat B  
Karen Blackburn, Seat I  
Roscoe Britton, Seat J (unable to be heard on Zoom)  
Rachael Kvapil, Seat K

**Members Absent:**

Jazzanne Gordon Fretwell, Seat C  
*Vacant*, Seat H

**Also Present:**

D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk  
Jessica Krier, HR Generalist

**CALL TO ORDER** (Reading of Mission Statement and Land Acknowledgement)

**Chair Webb** asked J. Rogers to read the FDC Mission Statement, and she asked J. Bagwill to read the Land Acknowledgement.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Chair Webb** led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**J. Bagwill**, seconded by **D. Shockley**, moved to APPROVE the agenda.

**Chair Webb** called for a voice vote on the motion to APPROVE the agenda, and all members voted in favor.

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of September 12, 2023

**J. Bagwill**, seconded by **M. Oss**, moved to APPROVE the minutes.

**Chair Webb** called for a voice vote on the motion to APPROVE the minutes, and all members voted in favor.

**REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

a) Members' Definitions of Diversity



**Chair Webb** briefly spoke to the recent quorum challenges of the FDC. She asked each member to introduce themselves and share with the group what diversity means to them.

**R. Kvapil** introduced herself and provided information about her professional background. She stated that whenever someone asks her about diversity, the first thing that comes to mind is frogs. She explained that is because she was fascinated by frogs in biology class and how the frogs, while being the same species, were all so different. She stated she relates that to the diversity in people.

**R. Basarab** stated the document he drafted for the FDC contained seven principles, and it was an effort to start a discussion about diversity. He suggested that the FDC have a common understanding of what diversity means prior to publishing materials. He then introduced himself and gave some information about his background.

**T. Ledna** introduced himself and provided information about his professional background. He stated that, to him, diversity is about having differences. He commented that he is more interested in inclusion and creating an environment that recognizes diversity and is inclusive of all people.

**J. Bagwill** gave an introduction of himself and spoke about his personal and professional background. He stated that diversity is about differences, but the FDC has an opportunity for diverse people to work together. He indicated that J. Rogers has changed his mindset on ideas like inclusion. He added that he would love to live in a place that does not need a diversity council, and the best thing the FDC can do is work itself out of a job.

**K. Blackburn** introduced herself and provided information about her professional background. She stated she feels that Fairbanks is her home and that diversity, to her, is a little of what everyone else has said. She stated that having been raised in the South, she has seen racism and prejudice and has had some bad experiences. She stated she loves what the FDC is trying to accomplish.

**M. Oss** gave an introduction of herself and spoke about her professional background. She stated that there is a new concept called *intersectionality*, which is about how one's life experiences come together and creates barriers to go through. She stated that to her, Fairbanks is diversity, and she wants to serve on the FDC to represent those who are not represented. She shared about her various life experiences and stated that she can relate to many situations. She stated she believes in looking for similarities – not differences – in others.

**D. Shockley** spoke about the reasons why she joined the FDC and stated that, to her, diversity is about inclusivity and equity. She provided information about her background and experiences in being an Alaska Native. She stated that people are sometimes put into categories, but she believes it is important to view others in more of a spiritual realm versus a physical realm. She expressed hope that as a community, people could be seen for who they are – not for what they are or how they may act.

**J. Rogers** stated that the idea of being inclusive has always been a definite and substantial label rather than “diverse.” She spoke to the talking circles that the FDC once hosted and stated that those were times where people felt welcomed and were able to openly share. She stated that Fairbanks’ “golden heart” is often used as a declaration in speeches but emphasized that the community needs to live up to that – not just declare it. She stated that many things are possible if everyone would strive to care for each other and lift each other up.

**Chair Webb** emphasized that acceptance is an important part of diversity. She commented that she is continually baffled by the level of anger she sometimes sees over just a difference in opinion. She stated that everyone is going to see life differently, but acceptance of others is important. She requested more information from M. Oss about the class she attended on intersectionality. She stated that it warms her heart to see so many FDC members attending the meeting and sharing.

J. Krier introduced herself and talked briefly about her family's history in Alaska. In viewing diversity, she stated that she thinks of people as a collection of varied realities and that each person's collection of experiences forms their perspective of reality.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### a) International Friendship Day (IFD) Follow-up

**Chair Webb** stated that R. Britton and J. Rogers attended the IFD event to represent the FDC. She asked J. Rogers to provide an update.

**J. Rogers** stated that Rosalind Kan, a former member of FDC, has organized the IFD event for many years. She stated that people from all walks of life, dancers, musicians, various groups, and all types of food are represented at IFD. She shared that the event takes place at the Pioneer Park Civic Center, and it is a great opportunity to talk with people. She commended R. Britton for helping with the event and for doing the heavy lifting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### a) Fairbanks Diversity Council "About Us" Statement

**Chair Webb** asked members how they would like to move forward with the FDC principles drafted by R. Basarab. She stated she would like to see the FDC move forward and accomplish tasks for the City.

*The draft principles read as follows:*

1. *Our commitment to diversity is what holds our collective work together. We believe the City of Fairbanks must have an effective, broad-based movement focusing on diverse, prejudice-free, and race-free work environments that reflect our communities.*
2. *We believe that key gatekeepers are essential to the goal of promoting diversity and eliminating prejudice in the City of Fairbanks.*
3. *We believe that understanding the lessons of history allows us to create a more diverse future.*
4. *We believe that we must be accountable to the community struggling with current and previous prejudice and racism.*
5. *We believe that we must build principled relationships with other organizations and communities based on humane and diverse values.*
6. *We believe that if a community's culture is respected and nurtured, the community's power will grow.*
7. *We believe that racism and prejudice can only be undone if people understand what it is, where it comes from, how it functions, and why it is perpetrated.*

Members discussed the meaning of the word “gatekeeper” as it is used in the principles. Members talked about the purpose of the FDC and made reference to the goals cited in the Diversity Action Plan (DAP). Members discussed the challenge in getting the word out that the FDC exists and debated the various ways to engage the community. There was a fair amount of discussion about hosting a talking circle, but no dates were scheduled as some members felt that the FDC was not prepared to host such a gathering.

**Chair Webb** stated that her new position at Explore Fairbanks is Community Engagement Manager. She stated she would check to see if she can make the FDC a part of her duties. She shared that she may also be able to get some free advertising for the FDC.

Members spoke to the importance of having a quorum at meetings so that action could be taken.

J. Krier shared an idea for a Human Library, which she thought would be a good way to engage the community.

### **FDC MEMBERS’ COMMENTS**

**J. Rogers** requested that the Mayor be asked to be more involved with the FDC, and she spoke about the level of involvement by past mayors.

**J. Bagwill** thanked everyone for attending the meeting.


**Chair Webb** requested that members reply to the City Clerk’s agenda emails each month to confirm whether or not they would be attending the meeting.

### **MEETING DATES**

a) Next Regular Meeting Date, January 9, 2023

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Webb** adjourned the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Juanita Webb, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS