

**Regular City Council Meeting
December 4, 2024 @ 7:00 pm
Cordova Center Community Rooms A & B
Minutes**

A. Call to order – **Mayor David Allison** called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at 7:00 pm on December 4, 2024, in the Cordova Center Community Rooms.

B. Invocation and pledge of allegiance – **Mayor Allison** led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Roll call – Present for roll call were **Mayor David Allison** and Council members **Kasey Kinsman**, and **Wendy Ranney**. Council members **Tom Bailer**, **Cathy Sherman**, **Dave Zastrow**, **Kristin Smith**, and **Ken Jones** (arrived at 7:10 pm) were present via zoom videoconference. Also present were City Manager **Samantha Greenwood** and City Clerk **Susan Bourgeois**.

D. Approval of Regular Agenda

Hearing no objection to approval of the agenda, **Mayor Allison** declared it approved.

E. Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest and ex parte communications - none

F. Communications by and Petitions from Visitors

1. Guest speakers - none
2. Audience comments regarding agenda items - none
3. Chairpersons and Representatives of Boards and Commissions - none
4. Student Council Report - none

G. Approval of Consent Calendar

5. Minutes: **a.** Oct. 23, 2024, City Council Public Hearing Minutes; **b.** Oct. 23, 2024, City Council Regular Meeting Minutes; **c.** Nov. 6, 2024, City Council Public Hearing Minutes; **d.** Nov. 20, 2024, City Council Public Hearing Minutes

Vote on the Consent Calendar: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Kinsman-yes; Zastrow-yes; Jones-absent; Ranney-yes; Bailer-yes; Smith-yes; and Sherman-yes. Consent Calendar was approved.

H. Approval of Minutes – in consent calendar

I. Consideration of Bids/Proposals/Contracts – none

J. Reports of Officers

6. Mayor's Report – **Mayor Allison** said he will give testimony at Board of Fish for the resolution that Council approved opposing the proposal regarding hatcheries.

7. City Manager's Report a. Ursa Major Water System Excellence Award for 2023

Greenwood reported: 1) congratulations for the water department; 2) we have received \$772,000 for the 2018 & 2020 salmon fisheries disaster and this time there are no strings attached, intended to be used for revenue replacement, she will have an item for next meeting to decide what to do with it. Currently it is in the AMLIP account earning interest; 3) Denali Commission has announced grants to be used as matches for other grants – she will apply for second street match through that program; 4) close to being complete with MARAD and Harbor rebuild, short punch list, mostly getting the O&M manual finalized, electrical, etc.; 4) Finance department working hard on Q&As and pamphlets for sales tax code; 5) she and Superintendent of Facilities **Malvin Fajardo** met with School District to discuss next steps in planning for High School upgrades.

8. City Clerk's Report a. notice of election – how to register

Bourgeois reported: 1) she introduced the new Deputy City Clerk **Colette Gilmour** who was in attendance tonight – **Bourgeois** said she is learning the role quickly and doing amazing work, Clerk's office very busy

with assessors, preparing for 2025 tax roll and the working through details of new exemptions; 2) preparation for the March 4, 2025, Election also underway – advertising has begun, declaration of candidacy opens December 17, 2024.

K. Correspondence

9. 11-15-24 letter from I Thorne regarding swimming pool costs
10. 11-21-24 Mayor Allison email to state regarding Kelly easement
11. 11-25-24 Email from mayor, forwarding email from P Kelly
12. 11-26-24 email request for EAS letter of support

Council directed the Mayor to bring a resolution of support for Alaska Airlines EAS application at the next meeting (**Sherman** suggested this); **Smith** hoped we could tailor our resolution to Cordova.

L. Ordinances and Resolutions

13. Ordinance 1225 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska authorizing the transfer of \$289,898 from the Permanent Fund Grant Project Fund, 104-901-57340, to the Grant Administration – Transfer from Permanent Fund, 401-390-49998, to pay the Second Street upgrade project and Whitshed pedestrian path project grant matches for FY25 – 2nd reading

M/Smith S/Sherman to adopt Ordinance 1225 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska authorizing the transfer of \$289,898 from the Permanent Fund Grant Project Fund, 104-901-57340, to the Grant Administration – Transfer from Permanent Fund, 401-390-49998, to pay the Second Street upgrade project and Whitshed pedestrian path project grant matches for FY25

Smith said we have talked about this before, it is second reading, these are projects we have talked about for years (Second St. upgrades and Whitshed Rd. pedestrian path). This is an amount we have to match for this year and there will be future matches but there is a significant amount of money coming in with these projects; \$9 million for one and \$8 million for the other. She supports this because our contribution is leveraging millions to upgrade infrastructure in our community. **Sherman** echoed those comments and added that these projects have been community vetted and supported. **Bailer** said he supports the projects but wonders if we should leave the permanent fund alone and use some of the \$772,000 we just received. **Kinsman** said he supports and then might also support putting some of the fish disaster funds back into the permanent fund as well. **Zastrow** and **Ranney** both said they would support. **Jones** also spoke in support.

Sherman's connection was lost, **Mayor Allison** voted.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Sherman-absent; Zastrow-yes; Kinsman-yes; Ranney-yes; Jones-yes; Bailer-yes; and Smith-yes; and Mayor Allison-yes. Motion was approved.

14. Resolution 12-24-36 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, adopting City service fees, rates, and charges for the 2025 calendar budget

M/Ranney S/Kinsman to approve Resolution 12-24-36 a resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, adopting City service fees, rates, and charges for the 2025 calendar budget

Ranney said we worked long and hard on this – fee schedule is where she'd like to see it she is ready to move forward with approval. **Kinsman** echoed that and said we have not heard any comments to the contrary. **Jones** said he supports this all except the new drive down dock fee, he doesn't think the fee is appropriate in the winter months. **Smith** said she supports this, and she appreciates the thoroughness of the fee schedule, looks like a lot of thought and time goes into this. **Zastrow**, **Bailer** and **Sherman** all said they would support.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Smith-yes; Sherman-yes; Bailer-yes; Ranney-yes; Zastrow-yes; Kinsman-yes; and Jones-yes. Motion was approved.

15. Resolution 12-24-37 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, adopting an operating budget for fiscal year 2025 and appropriating the amount of \$19,612,301

M/Ranney S/Kinsman to approve Resolution 12-24-37 a resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, adopting an operating budget for fiscal year 2025 and appropriating the amount of \$19,612,301

Ranney said a lot of work went into this – she appreciates response from the public; appreciates the hard work of City Manager and Finance team, **Sheryl Glasen**, she is ready to approve. **Kinsman** said he is in

support, looks forward to more support for the finance department and more reporting so we can see how we are tracking. He spoke to the public saying we are approving a nearly \$20 million budget and there has been little to no input from the public. **Jones** had no comment. **Bailer** said he would support this, but he is disappointed – hard choices need to be made in the future. We balanced this on a 1% sales tax increase and a 3-cent increase in fuel oil wharfage. We have to look at ski hill, chamber, library/museum, parks and rec, and all of our services. **Zastrow** said he hears those warnings from **Bailer** and agrees we should heed them. He also wanted to thank and commend **Sam** and **Sheryl** and all the staff for the fantastic job running down all that Council asked of them. He would like to see more real-time tracking of revenue, some of what we did for revenue in this budget is a calculated risk. Generally, though, he is in support of this budget. **Sherman** agreed that we should heed the warnings from **Bailer**, however, she doesn't know where we could make cuts to this without affecting services and she wishes there was more public input on budget. As it stands she is in support of this budget and is hopeful to see quarterly reports through the year for revenue tracking purposes. **Smith** said she agrees with a lot of what has been said. She thanked the staff for the hard work they did to put this together.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Bailer-yes; Kinsman-yes; Zastrow-yes; Smith-yes; Jones-yes; Ranney-yes; and Sherman-yes. Motion was approved.

M. Unfinished Business - none

N. New & Miscellaneous Business

16. Council concurrence of Mayor's appointments to fill vacancies on City Boards and Commissions **M/Kinsman S/Ranney** to concur with **Mayor Allison's** appointment of **Debra Adams** to the Library Board, **Tania Harrison** and **Chris Bolin** to the Planning Commission and **Kelsey Hayden** and **Aaron Hansen** to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion was approved.

17. Pending Agenda, CIP List, Calendar, Elected & Appointed Officials lists

Bailer said he'd like to revisit the economic development property tax exemptions. **Kinsman** suggested putting quarterly work sessions for financial reporting on the PA, first to be April 2025.

O. Audience Participation

P. Council Comments

Bailer mentioned a new state program through AHFC that gives a \$10K rebate to new single-family homes. He suggested Council putting a letter together to the Ski Hill board suggesting they go out and seek other funding sources and become a 501C3 if that helps in that regard.

Jones shares **Bailer's** sentiments about the budget and knows that property taxes have doubled since 2012. As far as budget he does not like cuts to ski hill or to chamber, he'd have preferred cuts to wages and health insurance because that is where the problem lies; that is where the cost overruns come from every year.

Zastrow everything in the budget is a hard choice – if we get good reporting we can stay on top of it. A lot of great things going on when you look at the City Manager's report – not the least of which is the excellence of our water department.

Sherman echoed how great our water is; including the great crew that maintains that system. Budget is tough each year no matter what – we need to be diligent as council members throughout the year not just at the budget season.

Kinsman echoed the kudos to water department. Encouraged businesses to submit questions in writing to the finance staff for the sales tax code clarifications. Thanked Council member **Bailer** for his insight and words of caution.

Smith said there is not much she can add, thanked everyone for a great meeting.

Ranney echoed the water department praise. Appreciates **Bailer's** comments and input. She thinks this budget was a bit of a wake-up call to some of the non-profits that the City cannot be their sole support.

Mayor Allison thanked everyone for the hard work on the budget, thanks for attending via zoom when they need to it is important and appreciated.

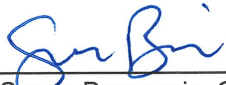
Q. Executive Session - none

R. Adjournment

Hearing no objection **Mayor Allison** adjourned the meeting at 7:58 pm.

Approved: January 15, 2025

Attest:



Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk

