FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, JUNE 8, 2026
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date, following the Annual Audit Presentation at 5:30 p.m., to conduct a Regular Meeting of the Fairbanks City Council via Zoom webinar and in the City Council Chambers at 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, with Mayor Mindy O'Neall presiding and the following Councilmembers in attendance:

Councilmembers Present:	Jerry Cleworth, Seat A Valerie Therrien, Seat B Sue Sprinkle, Seat C Crystal Tidwell, Seat D Lonny Marney, Seat E John Ringstad, Seat F
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 (remotely) Richard Sweet, Deputy Police Chief Andrew Coccaro, Fire Chief Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely) Jake Merritt, Human Resources Director Jarrod Zerbe, Code Compliance Officer

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

At the request of Mayor O'Neall, **Mr. Cleworth** read the land acknowledgement.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

FLAG SALUTATION

At the request of Mayor O'Neall, **Mr. Marney** led the flag salutation.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Barbara Kalen – B. Kalen shared that she moved to Fairbanks from Skagway 58 years ago and was astounded to learn that a mural was to be painted on City Hall, noting its status as the last historic public building in Fairbanks. She asked if the Mayor had requested and received permission from the Alaska Historical Society, which she claimed would have been required for the project. **Mayor O'Neall** explained that Councilmembers may not answer questions during Citizen's Comments.

Vera Kuklina – V. Kuklina stated that she is an Associate Research Professor at the University of Maryland and the principal of the project titled, "Biocultural Heritage in Arctic Cities as a Potential Resource for Climate Adaptation" (ARCA). She discussed the City Hall mural's role in the project and the collaboration that had occurred between various entities and individuals.

Ms. Sprinkle asked how long the project had been in the works. V. Kuklina reported that the project launched in 2024 and shared details of what had occurred since it began. She stated that they were unsuccessful in attempts to coordinate with the previous Mayor but had been working with Mayor O'Neall's office since February 2026.

Mr. Marney asked what other cities were involved with the program and why Fairbanks was chosen. V. Kuklina shared about the other cities they have worked with. She added that she is originally from Siberia and considered a cold climate like Fairbanks optimal for the project.

Diana Khaziakhmetova – D. Khaziakhmetova shared that she is a Research Associate with the ARCA project and had been involved from the beginning. She provided details and context for how the mural project came to be, including interviews with local residents and organizations. She expressed appreciation for the support they had received from the community.

Ms. Sprinkle asked where she was from. D. Khaziakhmetova shared that she is an indigenous person originally from Russia and provided details about her higher education in the United States.

Mr. Marney asked if there had been conversation about painting other buildings, such as those owned by Alaska Native organizations. D. Khaziakhmetova stated that they were open to working with those organizations as well as the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) but that City Hall was considered the best option.

Jo Woodward – J. Woodward spoke of the six-month limit for those staying at the Fairbanks Rescue Mission and asked what an individual should do once they have hit the cutoff. She noted that many services available to homeless people are limited to those dealing with addiction or those experiencing mental health issues. She stated that support is limited for those outside those groups and that the Rescue Mission is not the type of facility many believe it to be. She expressed additional frustration with the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation.

Tristan Glowa – T. Glowa shared that he is an executive with a non-profit organization based in the city and that he was pleased to see the murals at City Hall. He discussed his involvement with the FNSB Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and that the project aligned with goals in the 20-year Comprehensive Plan to celebrate local heritage and culture. He added that one of the artists is a friend who shared their positive experience in working with local Alaska Native Elders.

Aldean Kilbourn – A. Kilbourn spoke against the City Hall murals and asserted that they amounted to destruction of the building. She noted that City Hall had been added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1990, as shared on the placard near the entrance. She suggested that it was unacceptable that the City had neither gotten clearance from the National Register nor consulted with the local Historic Preservation Commission, the Fairbanks Genealogical Society, or the Tanana-Yukon Historical Society. She declared the project an abomination.

Mr. Cleworth pointed out that agenda item 9(a), which involved the possible reconsideration of a vote to protest an alcohol license, did not include a public hearing. He asked if now would be the best time to speak for those wishing to provide comments on the subject. City Attorney Thomas Chard confirmed that Citizen's Comments was the appropriate time for anyone wishing to speak on a matter that did not have a its own public hearing.

Kathy Lavelle – K. Lavelle stated that she was speaking on behalf of her daughter, Arlette Eagle-Lavelle, who had a prior engagement. She read a written statement from A. Eagle-Lavelle which discussed her ownership of Lavelle's Taphouse and overall participation in the business network in downtown Fairbanks. A. Eagle-Lavelle *[via her statement as read by K. Lavelle]* spoke against the Block 13 Hotel's application for a new Beverage Dispensary Tourism License (BDTL) which would only cost $2,500. She expressed disapproval of the process, suggested that money and status had influenced the decision of the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Board, and asked that the City Council uphold its decision to protest the application.

Ms. Sprinkle asked how much she had paid for a Beverage Dispensary License (BDL) when she and her husband opened their restaurant. K. Lavelle recounted a cost of about $100,000.

Mr. Marney noted that he did not recall seeing an application for K. Lavelle's former restaurant, Lavelle's Bistro, when they applied for a BDTL in 2023 and asked why. K. Lavelle explained that it would have only gone before local governing bodies if approved by the ABC Board.

Levi Kinkade – L. Kinkade stated that he represents Block 13 Hotel, LLC and that they are seeking the Council's support of their application for a BDTL. He provided details about the ownership entity and their investment of over $22MM in local development over the years. He affirmed that Lavelle's Bistro had been an excellent partner for many years, operating as an independent restaurant within SpringHill Suites, their downtown hotel. L. Kinkade recounted that the two primary reasons the Eagles had been denied in their pursuit of a BDTL were because they did not own the hotel and they had not done enough to renovate the space to enhance tourism. He asserted that Block 13 Hotel, LLC owns the hotel and is doing substantial renovations, with tourists being the primary focus. He pointed out that the ABC Board determined that Block 13 Hotel, LLC clearly qualifies for consideration of a BDTL, despite the objections from their former tenants.

Ms. Therrien asked if they currently experience problems attracting tourist groups due to the lack of a restaurant in the hotel. L. Kinkade stated that summer months are never a problem but that winter months are a challenge, as visitors typically want to have a restaurant onsite. He shared that the restaurant space is currently gutted and that they stopped renovations after the Council's recent protest of their application. **Ms. Therrien** asked if they have had to redirect tourist groups away from downtown because there is no hotel restaurant. L. Kinkade confirmed that they had. **Ms. Therrien** asked if they intend to complete renovations on the restaurant space. L. Kinkade indicated that they would if the license is approved. **Ms. Therrien** asked if they would be able to purchase a different type of license if the current application was not approved. L. Kinkade stated that he was unsure if they would do so, as the ABC Board had already affirmed that they qualify for the BDTL. He added that they had moved forward with the work on good faith.

Ms. Sprinkle noted that some simpler licenses allow for just beer and wine. She asked if that was an option. L. Kinkade stated that would be a negative option in their view. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if they viewed alcohol sales as necessary to open a restaurant in that space. L. Kinkade confirmed that for the customer base at the location it would not make sense to have a restaurant without an alcohol license. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if it is typical for any hotel to be granted a BDTL. L. Kinkade explained that there are specific requirements which make it less obtainable. He estimated that only seven or eight hotels within the state hold a BDTL. **Ms. Sprinkle** noted that many restaurants in the downtown area are closed on Sunday and/or Monday and asked if they would be open on those days. L. Kinkade declared that they intend to operate seven days a week.

John Theis – J. Theis shared that he works with the contractors performing the remodel of the restaurant space at the SpringHill Suites and that work had been halted due to the Council's protest of the BDTL. He asserted that JL Properties, the hotel manager, contributes millions in taxes to the City, operates hotels across Alaska, and would be great operators of a restaurant at that location.

David Pruhs – D. Pruhs applauded the Council's willingness to reconsider its protest of Block 13 Hotel's BDTL application. He stated that a BDTL is only available to owners of a hotel, so it was never an option for the owners of the former restaurant Lavelle's Bistro. He declared that the parameters are clear and that the decision on the appeal outlined why they had been denied the license. D. Pruhs noted that JL Properties has a great deal of real estate in Fairbanks and a lot of experience with the Alcohol and Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) process. He discussed when it is appropriate for the City to protest an application and asserted that during his time on the Council, he never felt that it was acceptable to take away a business owner's rights. He pointed out that the applicant had been granted the right to obtain a BDTL by the State of Alaska and that F. Eagle and K. Lavelle were asking the City Council to take away that right.

Franklin Eagle – F. Eagle acknowledged that it was a good thing for the SpringHill Suites to have a restaurant but asserted that Block 13 Hotel made a bad business decision by applying for a BDTL. He stated that he had tried to help by warning them in December 2025 that they would not qualify, given his own experience, and that he also wrote to the ABC Board and encouraged them to advise Block 13 Hotel that their application would be denied. He discussed his own experience with the process and claimed that laws were being applied inconsistently, with the ABC Board ignoring statutes cited in his denied appeal. F. Eagle encouraged the Council to uphold the protest and send a message to the ABC Board, implying that the Council would otherwise be complicit in ignoring Alaska statutes; he suggested that the Council's reputation and integrity was on the line.

Ms. Sprinkle noted that F. Eagle already held an alcohol license when he had applied for a BDTL and asked why he applied for a second one. F. Eagle explained that he wanted a succession plan as he prepared to sell the restaurant and that handing over a BDTL as part of any deal would allow for a new owner to spend about $250,000 less. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked F. Eagle to confirm that they closed the restaurant due to Block 13 Hotel not renewing their lease. F. Eagle explained that, unfortunately, they could not come to terms after years of negotiations. He stated that he was surprised to hear L. Kinkade suggest that they would likely not open a restaurant without an alcohol license nor would they pursue purchasing a regular BDL. He pointed out that he had operated a successful restaurant in the same space for over 20 years and had to pay the full price of a BDL.

Mr. Marney asked for more details on the cost of the different licenses. F. Eagle explained that a BDTL only costs $2,500 plus a biannual fee while a regular BDL, which is limited by population size, would cost up to $250,000 in the Fairbanks area.

Peter Miller – P. Miller shared that he works downtown and spoke in favor of the many recent revitalization efforts he has seen. He discussed the increased presence of artwork and many positive interactions with both tourists and locals. He advocated for improved pedestrian corridors throughout the city, such as the less-driven Lacey Street, and adding more life to downtown.

Mayor O'Neall, hearing no more requests for comment, declared Citizens' Comments closed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

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

> **Mayor O'Neall** called for objection to motion to APPROVE the agenda and the consent agenda and hearing none, declared the motion CARRIED.

Clerk Snider read the consent agenda into the record.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of May 11, 2026

> APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

b) Regular Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2026

> APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

SPECIAL ORDERS

a) Request for reconsideration of the motion to RESCIND the City Council's action to protest the following new beverage dispensary tourism license application with endorsements:

Type/License:	Beverage Dispensary Tourism, License 5656
Endorsements:	Hotel/Motel & Restaurant
DBA:	Block 13 Hotel
Applicant:	Block 13 Hotel, LLC
Location:	575 1st Avenue

Clerk Note: At the Regular Meeting of May 11, 2026, the City Council PROTESTED the above new alcohol license. At the Regular Meeting of May 18, 2026, a motion to RESCIND this action was made and seconded. The motion to rescind failed. A request by Mr. Marney for reconsideration of the motion to RESCIND was filed timely with the City Clerk on May 19, 2026.

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to RECONSIDER the motion to rescind the City Council's vote from May 11, 2026 to protest the Block 13 hotel application for a new beverage dispensary tourism license.

There was no discussion.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO RECONSIDER THE MOTION TO RESCIND THE CITY COUNCIL'S VOTE FROM MAY 11, 2026 TO PROTEST THE BLOCK 13 HOTEL APPLICATION FOR A NEW BEVERAGE DISPENSARY TOURISM LICENSE AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Marney, Ringstad, Cleworth, Sprinkle, Therrien, Tidwell
NAYS: None
Mayor O'Neall declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Marney explained his reasoning for making the request. He recounted that for the last few years the Council had placed strong emphasis on hearing from applicants of alcohol and marijuana licenses and that L. Kinkade had flown up from Anchorage to attend the May 11, 2026, but was never given a chance to address the Council regarding its vote to protest the license. He stated that the Council not allowing Kinkade to speak had been rude and noted that new information regarding the denied appeal of F. Eagle's application prompted his request to revisit the issue.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if the ABC Board would proceed with granting the license regardless of the Council's decision. Clerk Snider reported that the City Attorney had informed the ABC Board of the Council's vote to protest after the May 11 meeting but that the matter may be further deliberated. She shared that the City's response deadline had been June 2 but that staff had held off on any further communication as the request for reconsideration had already been received. She stated that the next regular meeting of the ABC Board was scheduled for June 23 and that the statute reads that the Board honor a local government's protest unless it is determined that the local governing body's decision was found to be "unreasonable, capricious, or arbitrary."

Mr. Cleworth asked the City Attorney to clarify whether or not an applicant for a BDTL must be the owner of a hotel. Attorney Chard recounted that there had been several questions after the last work session, following a review of F. Eagle's appeal denial. He explained that the best he could glean from his research was that while it was not absolutely necessary for a BDTL applicant to be a hotel owner, it was exceedingly easier for an owner applicant to be successful due to the requirement to show improvements that enhance tourism—not just maintenance activities within the business space. He noted that a non-owner applicant could technically perform the same improvement with coordination of the owner but that it was more difficult to envision that scenario. **Mr. Cleworth** asked for clarification on the legal definition of an improvement to a property. Attorney Chard reported that the appellate court had put a lot of time into reviewing that definition but found no clear answer in statutes or regulations. He recounted that Black's Law Dictionary had been referenced and, as such, it was deemed that upgrades such as changing out flooring and furniture fell under maintenance of a business and did not meet the threshold for improvements. He noted that F. Eagle had correctly stated that he could have appealed to a higher court but had chosen not to do so. He reiterated that a hotel owner would have a much easier time fulfilling the BDTL obligation for property improvements. **Mr. Cleworth** read from an email that Attorney Chard had sent, noting his advice to the Council to not get drawn into a disagreement between an individual and the State. He expressed agreement with that advice, suggesting that the Council was getting caught up in poorly written law which had created conflict between F. Eagle and the ABC Board—not the City of Fairbanks. He shared that he would vote in favor of the license but that he sympathized with F. Eagle's frustrations and agreed that the statutes should be clarified.

Ms. Therrien noted that the window for F. Eagle to appeal had been 30 days from July 1, 2024. She disclosed that she had represented him for many years on legal matters and wanted to know if she had a conflict of interest and should abstain from consideration of the matter. Attorney Chard provided details on how a conflict of interest would be determined, including pecuniary interests and any perception of impropriety. **Mayor O'Neall** asked if Ms. Therrien was representing F. Eagle on anything related to the matter before the Council. **Ms. Therrien** stated that she was not. **Mayor O'Neall** asked when the last time was that she had represented F. Eagle in any matter. **Ms. Therrien** reported that she had done so within the last six months. **Mayor O'Neall** ruled that Ms. Therrien did not have a conflict of interest. **Ms. Therrien** indicated that she disagreed. Attorney Chard explained how the Council could overrule the Mayor's decision. He acknowledged Ms. Therrien's commitment to a former client but noted that voting on the matter, to his understanding, would not be based on any knowledge gleaned from past representation.

Ms. Sprinkle asked why Block 13 Hotel was pursuing a BDTL now rather than when the hotel was first built; she questioned whether a BDTL existed then. Clerk Snider stated that the license type was not new but that she could not speak to whether it existed at the time the hotel was built.

Ms. Tidwell expressed frustration with the issue and stated that she stands by her past comments. She suggested that the mere presence of a restaurant does not attract tourists to Fairbanks and that several other establishments sell alcohol with a block of the hotel. She stated that it was hard for her to understand why Block 13 Hotel would be unwilling to open a restaurant even if they could not sell alcohol or why they would not pursue a regular BDL. She acknowledged that the property improvements were nice but noted that Block 13 Hotel's application appeared similar to F. Eagle's denied application. She reiterated that it was hard to say yes to one while saying no to another.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO RESCIND THE COUNCIL'S VOTE FROM MAY 11, 2026 TO PROTEST THE BLOCK 13 HOTEL APPLICATION FOR A NEW BEVERAGE DISPENSARY TOURISM LICENSE AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Ringstad, Marney, Therrien, Cleworth
NAYS: Tidwell, Sprinkle
Mayor O'Neall declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the new alcohol license application with endorsements.

Ms. Therrien acknowledged that without further action the Council would effectively be waiving protest but that she felt that a vote would ensure no misunderstanding of the Council's intent.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO WAIVE PROTEST ON THE NEW ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATION WITH ENDORSEMENTS AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Ringstad, Therrien, Marney, Cleworth
NAYS: Sprinkle, Tidwell
Mayor O'Neall declared the MOTION CARRIED.

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

Lic.	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
2565	El Dorado Bar & Grill	Beverage Dispensary	Eldorado Bar & Grill, Inc.	530 Third Avenue
4170	Caliente	Beverage Dispensary	Red Box, LLC	603 Lacey Street
4816	Mayan Palace	Beverage Dispensary	Taco Azteca, Inc.	3401 Airport Way
4174	Big Daddy's Bar-B-Q & Banquet Hall	Beverage Dispensary	RTG, LLC	107 Wickersham Street
3170	The Odom Corporation	General Wholesale	The Odom Corporation	3101 Peger Road – Bay 1

Mayor O'Neall called for testimony and hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

Mr. Ringstad, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the alcohol license applications for renewal.

There was no discussion.

> **Mayor O'Neall** called for objection on the motion to WAIVE PROTEST on the alcohol license applications for renewal and hearing none, declared the motion CARRIED.

c) The Fairbanks City Council held a public hearing and considered the new marijuana product manufacturing facility license application:

Type/License: Marijuana Product Manufacturing Facility, License 30924
DBA: Mood Lab
Applicant: H.S., LLC
Location: 899 Old Steese Highway

Mayor O'Neall called for testimony and hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

Mr. Ringstad, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the new marijuana product manufacturing facility license application.

Ms. Sprinkle asked for clarification on the location. **Mr. Marney** pointed out that it appeared to be in the rear portion of the building that is home to The Cabin as well as Pipe and Leaf.

Ms. Tidwell asked if there is a limit to the number of marijuana product manufacturing facility licenses that can be issued in the city. Clerk Snider clarified that there are limits on the number of retail marijuana stores within the city but that she was unsure if this type of license had limits. She noted that there are only a few licenses of that type in Fairbanks.

Mayor O'Neall pointed out that the application indicated that the kitchen would be within a secure area of the marijuana retail store, which suggested the rear portion of Pipe and Leaf.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if it was typical for a manufacturing operation to exist within a retail store.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to REOPEN Public Testimony.

> **Mayor O'Neall** called for objection on the motion to REOPEN Public Testimony and hearing none, declared the motion CARRIED.

Hailey Essig – H. Essig shared that she is the applicant and the owner of Pipe and Leaf and that they had applied to open an edibles manufacturing operation in the kitchen area of the building, noting that it had only been utilized for storage up to that point.

Ms. Sprinkle asked how customers might engage with the manufacturing facility component of the operation. H. Essig explained that it is a completely separate license in an area that would not be accessible to the public. She clarified that the only overlap between the two businesses would be that properly licensed employees may be allowed, during slow sales periods in the retail store, to access the secured kitchen area and assist with packaging products.

Mayor O'Neall, hearing no more requests for comment, declared Public Testimony closed.

There was no further discussion on the main motion.

> **Mayor O'Neall** called for objection on the motion to WAIVE PROTEST on the new marijuana product manufacturing facility license application and hearing none, declared the motion CARRIED.

d) The Fairbanks City Council considered whether to veto the decision of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Platting Board to approve a request to replat Blocks 11, 12, and 13 of 3rd Addition Leasure Subdivision, totaling approximately 16.97 acres, into two tracts of 14.16 and 2.81 acres. A variance was requested from FNSBC 17.56.010(I) to allow a tract's depth-to-width ratio to exceed 4:1. The request included:

- Vacation of a portion of the Braddock Street right-of-way (VA006-26). This is the portion between Thirty-Second Avenue and the North Star Industrial Railroad Spur.
- Vacation of a portion of the Macarthur Street right-of-way (VA007-26). This is the portion between Thirty-Second Avenue and the North Star Industrial Railroad Spur.
- Vacation of public utility easements (PUE). These include the 10 ft. wide PUEs along the road rights-of-way proposed for vacation and the 7.5 ft. wide PUE along the south boundary of Block 11. New PUEs will be created by this plat to provide easement continuity, and the 10 ft. wide PUE along the replat's north boundary will be widened to 30 ft.

Clerk Snider explained that the Council only needed to take action if it intended to veto the decision of the FNSB Platting Board.

Mr. Marney asked if the change would remove the property from the City's tax base. Attorney Chard stated he did not believe so but would welcome clarification from a Borough representative.

George Stefan, Platting Officer with FNSB Community Planning – G. Stefan explained that if the vacation stands, the vacated area would be absorbed by the adjoining lots. He added that the result would reconfigure the space as one larger tract and one smaller tract.

Mr. Cleworth asked if the Engineering Department had reviewed the decision. Chief of Staff Michael Sanders confirmed that they had and that the City would not be losing any existing roads, only land that had been reserved for potential roads.

No action was taken by the Council regarding the decision of the FNSB Platting Board.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT

Mayor O'Neall provided an update on several items, including activities from the past weekend such as street art downtown and 10 storm drains getting painted by local artists. In regard to the City Hall murals, she stated that she had issued a press release and emailed the Council after the initial timeline of July had moved up. She congratulated Fairbanks Police Department's Lieutenant Benn on his recent retirement and commended the Fairbanks Fire Department for becoming the first Emergency Medical Services agency in the state to earn the Gold-Level Pediatric Recognition from the Alaska State Office of EMS. **Mayor O'Neall** reported that the dock had been installed next to Golden Heart Plaza and had gotten a lot of use over the weekend. She shared that she had attended the recent "Build the Line" rally to express the City's support for a liquid natural gas (LNG) pipeline to be constructed with a Fairbanks spur line, and that she and Mr. Ringstad had met with representatives from the project's developer, Glenfarne Group. **Mayor O'Neall** stated that she had attended a two-day Alaska Municipal League (AML) board meeting which involved a comprehensive review of all its services. She spoke about the City's recently launched Ambassador program that enlisted 20 trained volunteers, and she shared details about the downtown walking challenge that was issued to businesses and community members. She concluded with an update on the effort to implement a mental health court for Fairbanks, to divert people from the criminal justice system into the mental health system to provide adequate care.

COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Therrien recounted that, during Citizens' Comments, some had cited concern over the murals due to City Hall being on the National Register of Historic Places and asked for clarification. **Mayor O'Neall** explained that although the building is on the registry, it was not built with federal funding, so painting, upgrades, and other alterations did not require approval.

Mr. Cleworth stated that during Citizens' Comments, someone had spoken in favor of Lacey Street permanently closing and becoming a pedestrian corridor. He stated that he did not support that idea, pointed out that the closure was intended to be temporary, and advocated for the street to reopen as soon as possible. He spoke of the murals on City Hall, noting that he only learned of the project when the email was sent the Wednesday prior. He added that it would have been nice for the Council to have had an opportunity to discuss it during its work session so that members could ask questions and gain more knowledge. He suggested that from a procedural standpoint, it would have been preferable to have the Council involved, either by sharing a preview of the plan or having a conversation about whether the project should be open for competitive bidding. He explained that he had received several strong opinions from residents on the matter after the press release but that he had no information with which to respond.

Ms. Therrien spoke of the Mayor and Mr. Ringstad's recent meeting with the Glenfarne Group regarding the LNG pipeline and asked if there would be opportunities for other Councilmembers to attend similar meetings. **Mayor O'Neall** indicated that there would not be, as getting more

Councilmembers involved would trigger requirements for public notice. **Ms. Therrien** asked if more information about the meeting could be shared. **Mayor O'Neall** invited Mr. Ringstad to provide a report. **Mr. Ringstad** shared that details about who was present and the topics discussed, such as communication, housing challenges, public safety concerns, and the company's intent for a Fairbanks-based office to assist with logistics. **Ms. Therrien** stated that if the company was to return for further discussions, she would like for the entire Council to be involved.

Ms. Sprinkle shared that she spent time as a tourist in her own town over the weekend and was surprised to see the amount of graffiti on the pedestrian bridge near Golden Heart Plaza. She asked who maintains the bridge. **Mayor O'Neall** indicated that FNSB is responsible for that particular bridge. **Ms. Sprinkle** stated that she would follow up with the FNSB. She reported seeing seasonal foot patrol Officer Elzey on duty downtown and that it was great to witness the activities taking place at the Starter Block on Lacey Street. She added that she would love to someday see the stretch of Second Avenue between Cushman and Noble convert to a pedestrian-only corridor.

Ms. Tidwell stated that she enjoyed the many great activities downtown over the weekend and that she also received feedback regarding the City Hall murals, although it was more positive than negative. She reported having participated in a ride-along with the Code Compliance Officer and gained a clearer perspective on how much had been accomplished in the few years since she joined the Council. She expressed excitement and hope for the direction they were heading and stated she believes the City Council is accomplishing great things.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Ordinance No. 6348 – An Ordinance Amending Various Sections of the Fairbanks General Code Dealing with Nuisances. Sponsored by Mayor O'Neall. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

Mayor O'Neall called for testimony and hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6348.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to AMEND Ordinance No. 6348 by substituting the amended, proposed version.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to AMEND the amendment by striking Sec. 78-397(c) under Section 3, which read:

> "No person may park a travel trailer, mobile home, or camp upon a city street or any other city owned or controlled property for more than 10 days for the purpose of residing therein, whether temporarily or not, except in area that are designated for that purpose."

Mayor O'Neall explained that the issue is addressed elsewhere in the Fairbanks General Code (FGC), so the language was unnecessary. Attorney Chard clarified that the language proposed for removal by the amendment conflicts with another section of the FGC which prohibits trailers from being parked on a publicly maintained street for over one hour.

Ms. Sprinkle expressed disapproval of the one-hour limit but acknowledged that it would need to be addressed through a separate motion.

> **Mayor O'Neall** called for objection on the motion to AMEND the amendment by striking Sec. 78-397(c) and hearing none, declared the motion CARRIED.

Ms. Sprinkle stated that she would like to see a change to Sec 78-397(a) and the one-hour limit for parking a trailer on a street. Attorney Chard clarified that the language had been in FGC for decades and while the Council could certainly amend it, a separate ordinance would be appropriate.

Mr. Marney suggested that the one-hour limit was not being enforced at all. Attorney Chard reported that they regularly see citations and even impounds for vehicles that had been left on the street for a period of time. **Mr. Marney** discussed the various departments involved with such removals and expressed interest in updating certain processes. **Mayor O'Neall** ruled that this was not germane to the motion on the floor but could be addressed at a future work session.

Ms. Sprinkle pointed out that other language within the same area of Code addressed time constraints and that it seemed confusing. At the invitation of Mayor O'Neall, Deputy Police Chief Richard Sweet and Code Compliance Officer Jarrod Zerbe explained the logic and enforcement of the regulations associated with parking within the right-of-way and answered clarifying questions.

Mr. Ringstad suggested that common sense would be key for whomever enforced the laws in question because there could easily be unintended consequences. Deputy Chief Sweet concurred and provided a summary of the process used when staff encounters an abandoned vehicle or trailer.

Attorney Chard advised that, after further consideration, an amendment to increase the one-hour limit for trailers would be appropriate, but only up to 24 hours as that is the limit established elsewhere in the FGC for all vehicles parked in the right-of-way. He added that the motion on the floor would first need to be disposed of.

Clerk Snider reviewed the items that would be revised with adoption of the proposed substitute.

> **Mayor O'Neall** called for objection on the motion to AMEND Ordinance No. 6348 by substituting the amended, proposed version and hearing none, declared the motion CARRIED.

Mr. Cleworth referenced the blighted property definition in Sec 10-208 which, if adopted, would state: "Properties zoned as residential containing two or more unregistered, inoperable, uncovered, or unscreened vehicles for more than 90 days." He stated that he knows many people who have two vehicles that meet that criteria and that they are often purchased to be worked on over time.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to AMEND Ordinance No. 6348, as Amended, by changing "two" to "three" under Sec. 10-208(a)(5).

> **Mayor O'Neall** called for objection on the motion to AMEND Ordinance No. 6348, as Amended, by changing "two" to "three" under Sec. 10-208(a)(5) and hearing none, declared the motion CARRIED.

Mr. Marney, in reference to Sec. 46-42, spoke of complaints from residents regarding noise tied to events at bars late in the evenings. **Mayor O'Neall** provided a summary of the noise variance process that businesses can apply for and how the City enforces any deviations. **Mr. Marney** noted that defecation and urination in public was not listed under the list of "*Nuisance activities*" between pages six and seven and asked if that was covered elsewhere in the FGC. Attorney Chard confirmed that Sec. 46-256 and Sec. 46-257 of the FGC addresses those items. He clarified that "nuisance" would generally refer to a repeated action. **Mr. Marney** explained that the Executive Director of Festival Fairbanks had shared that those issues continue to be a problem downtown.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to AMEND Ordinance No. 6348, as Amended, by changing "one hour" to "24 hours" under Sec. 78-397(a).

Ms. Therrien suggested the change would be more reasonable and in line with what is already enforced. Deputy Chief Sweet expressed support for the change.

> **Mayor O'Neall** called for objection on the motion to AMEND Ordinance No. 6348, as Amended, by changing "one hour" to "24 hours" under Sec. 78-397(a) and hearing none, declared the motion CARRIED.

Ms. Therrien gave examples of situations outside the permitted guidelines for RVs and vehicles parked on the street and asked if they were violations. Attorney Chard clarified that enforcement is typically in response to complaints or to address a dangerous situation but that, generally speaking, the City does not seek out parking violations absent of any other concern.

Mr. Cleworth stated that he has often been frustrated by certain unenforced laws but acknowledged that having the laws in place and available is a prudent approach.

Ms. Sprinkle agreed that there are other examples where the FGC provides enforcement "teeth" should a problem warrant a firmer response but that the reasonable discretion is also important.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6348, AS AMENDED, AS FOLLOWS:

> YEAS: Sprinkle, Therrien, Cleworth, Marney, Ringstad, Tidwell
> NAYS: None
> **Mayor O'Neall** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6348, as Amended, ADOPTED.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Resolution No. 5215 – A Resolution Amending the City Schedule of Fees and Charges for Services by Adding a Fee for Excessive Police Responses. Sponsored by Mayor O'Neall.

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Ms. Tidwell**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5215.

Mr. Ringstad stated that he supported the idea behind the resolution but had some concerns over the functional reality. He recounted that the Council had seen several properties with long call reports where many calls were not related to that specific address. He expressed hope that staff would have a conversation with any property owners or businesses before assessing any fees under the new regulation. **Ms. Sprinkle** noted that Ordinance No. 6348 included considerations to address the very concerns Mr. Ringstad had identified.

Mr. Cleworth stated he thought the fee already existed. M. Sanders clarified that Ordinance No. 6348 deleted the fee from Code, and Resolution No. 5215 would add it to the fee schedule.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5215 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Tidwell, Cleworth, Ringstad, Marney, Sprinkle, Therrien
NAYS: None
Mayor O'Neall declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5215 APPROVED.

b) Resolution No. 5216 – A Resolution Amending the City Schedule of Fees and Charges for Services by Adjusting Garbage Collection Rates. Sponsored by Mayor O'Neall.

Ms. Tidwell, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5216.

Mr. Marney recounted that garbage collection rates had gone up each of the six years that he served on the Council. He asked if there were any options to pursue relief from the FNSB. **Mayor O'Neall** reported that she had spoken with the Borough Mayor who indicated openness to the idea, provided the City offered a concession such as not charging the Borough for fire inspections.

Ms. Sprinkle recalled that one year the Council had chosen to not raise rates, which negatively impacted the budget the following year. M. Sanders confirmed that was correct. He stated that by the end of that year the numbers did not pencil out, and he explained how constraints for allowable annual increases prevented the City from raising rates enough to make up for the difference.

Mr. Cleworth asked if the numbers in the resolution aligned with those in the 2026 budget. Chief Financial Officer Margarita Bell confirmed that the budget had used an estimated increase of 2.2% and that the actual change had come to 2.1%. **Mr. Cleworth** asked if failing to approve the increases would require a later budget amendment. CFO Bell confirmed it would.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5216 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Therrien, Tidwell, Ringstad, Marney, Sprinkle, Cleworth
NAYS: None
Mayor O'Neall declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5216 APPROVED.

c) Resolution No. 5217 – A Resolution Establishing the Rate of Levy of 2026 Real Property Taxes for the City of Fairbanks, Alaska. Sponsored by Mayor O'Neall.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5217.

Ms. Sprinkle recounted that in 2025 the Council had chosen to pay $3MM out of the City's General Fund to cover the first payment of a lawsuit settlement *[see the regular meetings minutes of June 9 and 23, 2025]*. She asked if any increase in the mill rate was being used to recover funds for that payment. CFO Bell confirmed that it was not.

Mr. Ringstad stated that he recalled one $3MM payment earlier in 2025 and another later in 2025. **Mayor O'Neall** asked CFO Bell to provide a history of the payments related to the settlement.

CFO Bell explained that in early 2025, the City's insurance provider made its payment of $2MM towards the $11.5MM settlement and that another $3MM was paid by the City directly. She recounted that in June 2025 it was proposed *[see Resolution No. 5175]* that the $3MM be recovered through the mill rate for the coming year, as outlined in FGC for claims and judgements against the City. She noted that the Council amended the resolution at that time to reduce the rate of levy such that the first payment of $3MM would come from the General Fund, with the understanding that the remaining payments would involve recovery through property taxes in coming years. CFO Bell reminded the Council that a $3.25MM payment was made in October 2025, and a final payment of $3.25MM would be due in October 2026. She clarified that while Resolution No. 5217 would increase the rate of levy, the footnote explains that "taxes for judgements and claims were reduced by $4,000,000. This amount will be levied over five to ten years beginning June 2028."

Mr. Ringstad expressed frustration that taxpayers would be responsible for something that had nothing to do with them from decades ago. He indicated a preference for the City to pay what it can from savings. CFO Bell explained that the Council would not be able to transfer the funds without violating the FGC, as the unassigned General Fund balance cannot drop below $10MM or 20% of budgeted operational expenditures, whichever is greater *[FGC Sec 2-651(b)]*. **Mr. Ringstad** stated that he would like more details on the fund balance to better understand the Council's options. CFO Bell shared that that would be reviewed at the next Finance Committee meeting. **Mr. Ringstad** pointed out that he was expected to vote on the resolution presently.

Ms. Therrien suggested that it could have been worse. She recalled discussion at the work session over an estimated mill rate of 7.587 but that the suggestion from Mayor O'Neall to spread the Risk Fund replenishment in $1MM increments over five or more years had brought it down to 6.381.

Mr. Marney asked if the Council had to make that decision right away. CFO Bell stated that the Council need only set the mill rate for the coming year right away and that it could determine at a later time how to address the outstanding $4MM.

Ms. Sprinkle recounted having always heard that the current Council could not commit specific spending obligations for a future Council and asked if the proposal was permitted. **Mayor O'Neall** confirmed that this was an existing liability that must be paid but that the manner in which the Council replenishes the Risk Fund was within its purview. She gave an example of the type of fiscal commitments that would not be permitted.

Mr. Ringstad surmised that this meant the Council could set the mill rate for the coming year but not any years beyond that. He reiterated his disappointment in not having additional fund balance information to review other options.

Mr. Marney noted that while the Council must set the mill rate by June 15, the City does not receive certification documents from the Borough until the end of May, which gives the Council very little time to make a significant decision. **Mayor O'Neall** acknowledged the challenge of the timing and clarified that it is driven by State statute and the difference in fiscal years.

Ms. Sprinkle and **Mr. Ringstad** asked additional questions regarding the proposed amounts and rates. CFO Bell provided details about the mechanics associated with the mill rate process.

Mr. Cleworth pointed out that by not including all the payments in the mill rate, the Council is creating a $4MM debt. He noted that a final $3.25MM payment is due by October 2026 and asked if there will be sufficient cashflow to cover it. CFO Bell confirmed that there would be.

Ms. Therrien suggested that the Council's hands are tied in the matter and that the Mayor's proposal to spread the burden over several years would help taxpayers.

Ms. Sprinkle agreed that two weeks to address such an important issue was unfortunate and asked to confirm there was not time for a work session discussion. CFO Bell confirmed that was correct.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5217 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Sprinkle, Tidwell, Marney, Therrien
NAYS: Ringstad
Mayor O'Neall declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5217 APPROVED.

d) Resolution No. 5218 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply For Funds from the United States Department of Homeland Security for the FY2025 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG). Sponsored by Mayor O'Neall.

Chief of Staff Sanders provided a report on the grant, noting that with a 10% match the City could receive up to $1MM worth of training and equipment for the Fairbanks Fire Department.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Tidwell**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5218.

Mr. Marney acknowledged that it was a good opportunity but asked if the City would have the money to cover a $100,000 match. M. Sanders shared that he believed the match was feasible. **Mayor O'Neall** clarified that the resolution only authorized the City to apply for the grant.

Ms. Sprinkle referenced the project details in the fiscal note and asked about a "Hazmat unit." M. Sanders explained that it was a vehicle specific for responding to incidents involving hazardous materials. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if one must be specially licensed to operate the vehicle, similar to an ambulance. M. Sanders clarified that any firefighter would be able to drive the vehicle.

Mr. Cleworth pointed out the $600,000 to cover overtime associated with training and asked if that was accurate. Fire Chief Andrew Coccaro explained that the department would modify staffing, as much of the training is 40-80 hours and not conducive for regular shift schedules. He affirmed that, other than the match, all of the expenses would be covered through the federal grant.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if the department had the manpower to hold the trainings in addition to their regular workload. Chief Coccaro confirmed that the trainings could be spread out effectively.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5218 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Ringstad, Therrien, Cleworth, Marney, Sprinkle, Tidwell
NAYS: None
Mayor O'Neall declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5218 APPROVED.

e) Ordinance No. 6349 – An Ordinance Transferring Land to the State of Alaska and Creating a Temporary Easement for the Steese/Johansen Interchange Project. Sponsored by Mayor O'Neall.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA

f) Ordinance No. 6350 – An Ordinance Enacting Fairbanks General Code Chapter 70, Article II, Section 70-63, Requiring a Request for Proposals and Certain Procedures to Aid in the Solicitation and Selection of Long-Term Lessees of City-Owned Property. Sponsored by Councilmembers Cleworth, Marney, Sprinkle, Therrien, and Ringstad.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

a) Clay Street Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes of May 6, 2026

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Therrien shared a message she received from Randy Frank regarding his disappointment in the name change of Pioneer Park as well as how he had been treated at the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics. She shared that AML would hold a conference in August.

Ms. Sprinkle reported that the FNSB Economic Development Commission had discussed certain economic sharing powers between the City and Borough which needed to be reviewed and renewed soon. She discussed positive examples of the Storefront Improvement Program she had seen downtown and shared that the Borough had issued a bowling rematch challenge to the City Council. She reported having also received positive and negative feedback from citizens regarding the City Hall murals and stated that it was a shame the Council had no prior knowledge of the project. M. Sanders shared details about the original plan which would have involved more public input and an anticipated implementation of July or August. He provided clarification on a lull in communication that had occurred and how the plan changed recently, with almost no notice, which put the Mayor in a difficult position to either say yes or see the whole project fold. He asserted that there had been no nefarious intent or desire to keep details from the Council or the public. He confirmed that he had spoken a State official in reference to the National Register of Historic

Places concerns to ensure the City could proceed with the murals. **Ms. Sprinkle** acknowledged the timing challenges and suggested that even a simple mention of the project to the Council, when the idea was coming together earlier in the year, would have been nice.

Mr. Cleworth suggested it was a mistake to move forward with the murals without the involvement of the Council or the public and that it may have been better to hold off on such a decision even if it meant the project may not come to fruition. He shared having seen an announcement that the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation may be considering separating Fairbanks from North Pole for air quality issues, which would be positive for the City. He recounted that Fairbanks had not been out of compliance for many years and that it would be nice to not be penalized when the sensors in the Badger Road area get triggered. He recommended the Council pass a resolution supporting the change. **Mr. Cleworth** discussed electric, pedalless bicycles which can reach high speeds and are generally ridden by youth on sidewalks. He stated that he is unaware of any regulations for the "e-moto bikes" but that he has heard they have caused some problems in town. He suggested the Council discuss the issue at the next work session.

Mr. Marney shared that he has seen groups of kids riding e-bikes at high speeds and he agrees it should be discussed. He provided a report on the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation's recent Alaska Regional Development Organization (ARDOR) committee meeting.

Ms. Therrien expressed disagreement with the Mayor's ruling that she did not have a conflict of interest regarding the BDTL license. She explained that attorneys develop relationships with clients where even if they are not representing the client on a current issue, the client still views them as their attorney, as the relationship may be reactivated. She asserted that the decision put her in a difficult place and she wished the Council would have considered overruling the Mayor.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk Snider stated that she had nothing to report.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Chard stated that he had nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor O'Neall declared the meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

MINDY O'NEALL, MAYOR

ATTEST:

D. DANYIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: CC