



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, NOVEMBER 10, 2025
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date, following a 5:15 p.m. Work Session for the Explore Fairbanks Annual Report and Presentation and a 5:50 p.m. Work Session for the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation (FEDC) Annual Report and Presentation, 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'Neill 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

Absent: None

Also Present: D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk
 Thomas Chard, City Attorney
 Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff
 Jake Merritt, Human Resources Director
 Ron Dupee, Police Chief
 Richard Sweet, Deputy Police Chief
 Andrew Coccaro, Fire Chief
 Jeremiah Cotter, Public Works Director
 Robert Pristash, City Engineer
 Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely)
 Lauryn Schloemer, Executive Assistant

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

FLAG SALUTATION

At the request of Mayor O'Neill, City Attorney Thomas Chard led the flag salutation.

CEREMONIAL MATTERS (Proclamations, Introductions, Recognitions, Awards)

Public Works Director Jeremiah Cotter discussed a recent "Name the Equipment" contest, where individuals were invited to submit fun name ideas for three snowplows and a dump truck. He shared the winning names and the individuals who had submitted them.

Mayor O’Neill recognized Executive Assistant Lauryn Schloemer, who would soon be leaving her position. She spoke highly of her performance, noting the significant help she had provided during her first seven days as mayor. Chief of Staff Michael Sanders spoke of L. Schloemer’s fantastic initial interview and her taking on several projects over the last couple of years. He stated that she had been an amazing employee and would be missed. L. Schloemer shared that as native-born Australian, she was nervous to come to the United States for the first time but was moved by how warmly she had been welcomed.

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.]

Jeff Jacobson – J. Jacobson shared details about the “Light the World – Giving Machine” program which raised \$24MM worldwide from its inception in 2017 through 2023. He explained that it was started as a way to make helping those in need as easy as buying a snack from a vending machine. He reported that the campaign expanded in 2024, raising \$16MM in a single year, which included \$80,000 via the first ever machine placed in the local area. He noted that Fairbanks was recognized as one of the most giving communities per capita in the world in terms of the program. J. Jacobson listed the local charities who benefited from the Giving Machine in 2024 as well as those selected for 2025. He shared that 100% of proceeds go to the chosen organizations and invited all to visit the machine at the Santa Claus House from November 19 to December 10.

Nicole Hansen – N. Hansen stated that she was also involved with the Light the World Giving Machine program and that in her 25 years of living in Fairbanks, she had always found it to be a very giving community. She shared that she had been working with the selected local charities and was excited and hopeful to see people come out again to support the organizations.

David Hayden – D. Hayden discussed the property at 129 3rd Avenue, which he has lived next to for over 20 years. He reported that the property had not really changed at all in that time and that there are several problems he had complained about over the past year and a half. He asserted that it meets the definition of a blighted property, citing examples for his claim, and asked why the City had not designated it as such. He stated that he is building a duplex on the lot next to the property and suggested the City proceed with fines and other action to resolve the issues.

Mr. Cleworth asked D. Hayden if he knew whether the water had been disconnected on the property. D. Hayden shared that when he called the water company to inquire, he was told that they had no record of water service at the address.

Mr. Ringstad asked D. Hayden if there was a house on the property. D. Hayden stated there was only a shed.

Mr. Marney asked if the City had any record of the property owner. **Mayor O’Neill** noted that the owner’s name would be available through the Borough’s property database. D. Hayden stated the owner had allowed a homeless individual to live in the shed in exchange for cleaning things up but that after speaking with the individual, it was clear they did not have the faculty to perform such work.

Nick Clark, Battalion Chief at Fairbanks Fire Department (FFD) – N. Clark spoke on the Letter of Agreement (LOA) attached to Ordinance No. 6330 and the effort to resolve some long-term concerns with what the City can do with paramedic program students from the local technical college. He acknowledged the pros and cons on both sides of the issue and shared that the Fairbanks Firefighters Union's (FFU) voting period on the matter would close the following night. He stated that he would notify the City administration of the outcome of the membership's vote. N. Clark reported on an upcoming event involving blood testing to screen for cancers. He noted that it was a new benefit from the recently adopted labor contract and that the testing had the potential to catch medical concerns earlier than normal. He explained that the test potentially improves options and cost for treatment and expressed appreciation for the new benefit.

Ms. Sprinkle asked N. Clark if the ride-along program within the LOA was something they had done in the past. N. Clark explained that they had done it before but that there was new leadership at the technical college, as well as many new members at FFD, and that the program had been dropped over the last few years as workloads increased. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if relationships developed through the program often lead to more students staying in the area. N. Clark confirmed that past experiences with the program indicated success in regard to local hiring.

Ms. Therrien asked how many students are in the program. N. Clark stated that class sizes vary, that he believes the current group includes eight students, and that attrition occurs through the school year. **Ms. Therrien** asked for more information on the logistics of the ride-along program. N. Clark explained the various types of students who participate in the program and where they come from. He noted that each student is required to get 240 hours, which can be overwhelming.

Ms. Tidwell asked for clarification on the fiscal note of the ordinance, given that it was a program they been involved with in the past. N. Clark explained that the fiscal note included preceptor pay to compensate for the extra work being put on those teaching and interacting with the students. He acknowledged that this was not part of the program in the past but rather something they had been hoping to see included for a long time.

Mr. Ringstad spoke from personal experience and urged them to push for participation in the cancer screening event. N. Clark concurred with the importance of preventive care and screening.

Mr. Marney recognized the value of the partnership outlined in Ordinance No. 6330 but asked if N. Clark or the FFU membership would be upset if the program was discontinued. N. Clark stated that he believed it was a good program but after several weeks of discussion, it seemed that opinions were split among FFU members. He suggested that if it was to be voted down, further discussion would be warranted. **Mr. Marney** asked if it would be beneficial to postpone the ordinance to allow more time to iron out remaining concerns. N. Clark shared that a primary concern was that the City would not get enough out of the agreement, despite being vital to the program's success, providing significant work to help students meet their minimum number of hours. He noted that they used to get a couple free spots with the program but that the suggestion for such an arrangement to return had been shot down by the college. He suggested that FFD's call volume makes the department the best partner option for the college to help students meet their requirements. He reiterated that both entities want a good partnership and that the City Council would have the result of the membership's vote before the second reading of Ordinance No. 6330.

Ms. Sprinkle pointed out that it seems to be a very tight window. N. Clark clarified that regardless of the vote's outcome, there would be continued conversations to improve the partnership.

Mr. Cleworth asked N. Clark if this was a one-and-done kind of deal or if there would be ongoing costs. N. Clark pointed out that the LOA included a sunset date and that the proposal was a one-time agreement which the City and union would need to review for renewal. **Mr. Cleworth** asked how many people would be included under the current fiscal note. N. Clark stated he was unsure.

Randy Griffin – R. Griffin spoke on Resolution No. 5192, specifically referencing the legislative priority regarding a natural gas line spur to serve the Fairbanks area. He asserted that a gas line for Fairbanks would be a great benefit to the community, even if it was 35 miles out of town, and he added that it was something many had hoped and dreamed for over the last 50 years. R. Griffin expressed concern over a recently heard sentiment where some have suggested that if Fairbanks cannot secure its own spur for the gas line, then the entire project should be held up. He pointed out that environmental groups often already find ways to hold up projects and that legislatures should not get too vicious with their demands as they pursue the gas line.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

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

Mr. Cleworth pulled items 12(a), Resolution No. 5192, and 12(c), Ordinance No. 6330, from the consent agenda.

Ms. Therrien pulled item 13(a), 2026 City Council Meeting Schedule, from the consent agenda.

Mr. Ringstad pulled item 13(b), Councilmember Appointments to City and Community Boards and Commissions, from the consent agenda.

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the APPROVAL of the agenda and the consent agenda, as amended, and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of October 27, 2025

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

SPECIAL ORDERS

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

| Lic. | DBA | License Type | Licensee | Address |
|-------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 12325 | GOOD Cannabis | Retail Marijuana Store | Good, LLC | 356 Old Steese Highway |
| 14467 | Tanana Herb Company, LLC | Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility | Tanana Herb Company, LLC | 1200 Well Street |
| 15800 | Baked Alaska, LLC | Marijuana Product Manufacturing Facility | Baked Alaska, LLC | 2745 Hanson Road, Unit B |
| 15814 | Tanana Herb Company, LLC | Retail Marijuana Store | Tanana Herb Company, LLC | 1200 Well Street |
| 16091 | Tanana Herb Company, LLC | Marijuana Concentrate Manufacturing Facility | Tanana Herb Company, LLC | 1200 Well Street |

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the marijuana license applications for renewal.

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

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the motion to WAIVE PROTEST on the marijuana license applications for renewal and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT

Mayor O'Neill discussed the several budget-focused work sessions held over the past week as the Council heard from each department. She noted that it was a new process to her and that there would be more discussion in the near future as they prepare a final draft budget for review.

COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Sprinkle expressed appreciation for the Public Works equipment naming contest and stated she hopes they can do something similar next time a new large piece of equipment is purchased.

Ms. Therrien asserted that the two presentations in the earlier Special Work Sessions felt very rushed and that she would like to see them split in the future, doing just one a night or start earlier.

Mr. Cleworth referenced the report about a blighted property from D. Hayden during Citizens' Comments. He discussed the process the City would follow if the property did, in fact, meet the definition of being blighted and the remedies available when an owner is unresponsive. Chief of Staff Sanders reported that the property did have someone previously living in the shed but that it was now secured. **Mayor O'Neill** asked if the City had begun the timeline to follow protocols for designating the property as blighted. M. Sanders shared that the owner had been working with the City, albeit slowly, and had requested an extension for completion of remedies. He acknowledged that the matter was not a high priority. **Ms. Therrien** asked if the property had been registered as vacant by the owner and if any associated fines been paid. M. Sanders clarified that staff had only recently sent out the first round of letters regarding vacant properties.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Resolution No. 5192 – A Resolution Stating the City of Fairbanks Legislative and Capital Priorities for 2026. Introduced by Mayor O’Neill.

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5192.

Mr. Ringstad reported on how the existing list of priorities had come about. He shared that the Council would meet with members of the Interior Delegation on November 24, so it is necessary for the Council to approve a list of priorities to be discussed at the meeting. He acknowledged that the City would be lucky to see any items come to fruition, so it would be wise to opt for a brief, focused list. He explained that the items were sorted into categories and went through each of the legislative priorities, pointing out that some had carried over from the past year, some were applicable to essentially every municipality in Alaska, and some were broader issues that extended beyond the state. **Mr. Ringstad** stated that he was unsure of what exactly was being requested in item 7, which addressed “the development and expansion of a crisis behavioral health system in the State of Alaska.” He reviewed the list of capital priorities, acknowledging that money may or may not be available but that requests should be on the record in the event that funds are available. He suggested that the Council discuss whether to narrow the list to just their highest priorities.

Ms. Therrien reported that the initial list had 12 legislative items and six capital items, which has already been narrowed down. She provided further clarification from the City’s Crisis Now Coordinator regarding item 7 and advocated for keeping it on the list. **Ms. Sprinkle** suggested that it would be better if item 7 spoke to the need for Fairbanks specifically rather than statewide. **Ms. Therrien** indicated that they could amend it as such if the Council desired. **Mr. Ringstad** clarified that there was a statewide fund for the crisis behavioral health system from which the City could apply for grants. **Ms. Therrien** gave additional comments on the reason why the presented items had been included on the list of priorities.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5192 by adding “and our representatives in Congress (House and Senate)” at the end of the first “BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED” statement.

Mayor O’Neill called for objection to the motion to AMEND Resolution No. 5192 by adding “and our representatives in Congress (House and Senate)” at the end of the first “BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED” statement and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Marney asked for clarification on item 2 under the 2026 Operational Priorities section, lobbying for maintaining a \$90MM balance in the Community Assistance fund. **Ms. Therrien** provided additional details.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if there had been any progress on the idea of adding watermarks to FPD video footage provided through public records requests. City Attorney Thomas Chard stated that he did not have an update on the matter.

Mr. Cleworth explained that he pulled the resolution from the Consent Agenda because he noticed that there was no backup documentation included like there had been in prior years. He concurred that the list was good but perhaps too long. He advocated for a shorter list but acknowledged that each item had merit.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5192, as Amended, by revising item 1 under 2026 Operational Priorities to read, "Reduce the municipalities PERS rate of 22%."

Mr. Cleworth explained that the City had paid over \$132MM towards the PERS liability from 2008 to 2023, as a direct result of mismanagement of the fund by the State. He asserted that the City had not caused the problem and that it, like other municipalities across Alaska, need to advocate for a change, especially given that the debt was not decreasing each year, as it should be. He reiterated that municipalities should not continue to be responsible for legacy debt.

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the motion to AMEND Resolution No. 5192, as Amended, by revising item 1 under 2026 Operational Priorities to read, "Reduce the municipalities PERS rate of 22%" and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Ms. Sprinkle shared that she had heard that the company building the gas line was seeking a route that would avoid going through the Fairbanks North Star Borough, in an effort to avoid paying property tax, which would increase the total distance needed for any spur to serve Fairbanks.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5192, as Amended, by replacing "State of Alaska" with "Fairbanks community" in item 7 under 2026 Operational Priorities.

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the motion to AMEND Resolution No. 5192, as Amended, by replacing "State of Alaska" with "Fairbanks community" in item 7 under 2026 Operational Priorities and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Ms. Therrien addressed Mr. Ringstad's comments about shortening the list of capital priorities and noted that, initially, there was six items. She advocated for keeping all four on the list.

Mr. Ringstad reiterated that the City is unlikely to get even one thing on the list, which supports the idea of narrowing it down to a single request. He suggested keeping the first priority, as it was similar to the issue with the PERS rate where the State made a change to radio systems which resulted in a significant expense for the City to upgrade its equipment.

Mr. Ringstad, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5192, as Amended, by eliminating items 2, 3 and 4 under 2026 Capital Priorities.

Ms. Sprinkle indicated that she supports the idea of a more focused request.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to AMEND the motion to amend Resolution No. 5192, as Amended, by keeping item 4 and only eliminating items 2 and 3.

Ms. Therrien explained that the Council had only recently learned about the event and emergency response barricade needs referenced in item 4 and that there had not been a chance to speak with congressional representatives about that need.

Ms. Tidwell stated that she opposed the amendment to the amendment, noting that the equipment referenced in item 1 was something the City must pay for, whereas the barricades were a want. She pointed out that in the event the City gets only one item from the list of priorities, she would like to ensure it was a need rather than a want.

Mr. Cleworth expressed concurrence with the focused approach. He agreed that the barricades are too new of an idea and that there are not enough details to warrant the request.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 5192, AS AMENDED, BY KEEPING ITEM 4 AND ONLY ELIMINATING ITEMS 2, AND 3 UNDER 2026 CAPITAL PRIORITIES AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Therrien

NAYS: Sprinkle, Ringstad, Cleworth, Tidwell, Marney

Mayor O'Neill declared the MOTION FAILED.

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the motion to AMEND Resolution No. 5192, as Amended, by eliminating items 2, 3 and 4 under 2026 Capital Priorities and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Ringstad stated that the numbered lists may unintentionally imply a ranking of priorities and that unless the Council wanted to prioritize the lists, he would like to see bullet points instead. **Mayor O'Neill** indicated that would be a clerical change made without a motion.

Mr. Marney spoke of the “baby boxes” initiative referenced in item 2 under 2026 Priority Legislation. He shared that he has been passionate about the issue and that, to his understanding, the legislation is already a done deal. He stated that he would be okay with the item being removed in the interest of shortening the list. **Mr. Ringstad** suggested that the item remain on the list.

Mr. Cleworth asked if there would be backup material attached to the resolution for each item. **Ms. Therrien** confirmed the committee had received information for each submitted item. **Mr. Ringstad** stated that all materials could be shared with the Council. **Mayor O'Neill** asked if Mr. Cleworth was requesting to see all items that individual departments had submitted for consideration or just the backup materials for the priorities being approved in the resolution. **Mr. Cleworth** clarified that he would like to see the details for the finalized list. He noted that backup material for most of the items already exists from the previous year’s similar resolution.

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 5192, as Amended, and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5192, as Amended, APPROVED.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if the complete version of the document, with the backup materials, could be provided at the next work session, prior to the meeting with the Interior Delegation. **Mayor O'Neill** confirmed that such could be arranged.

- b) Ordinance No. 6329 – An Ordinance Ratifying a Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Fairbanks and the AFL-CIO Crafts Council. Introduced by Mayor O'Neill.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- c) Ordinance No. 6330 – An Ordinance Amending the Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks Firefighters Union (FFU) IAFF Local 1324. Introduced by Mayor O'Neill.

Ms. Therrien seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6330.

Mayor O'Neill invited Fire Chief Andrew Cocco to speak on the ordinance. Chief Cocco thanked all who had been involved with the discussions, which he believes had been open and honest from all sides. He reported that there had been several iterations of the LOA and that they had worked to find a good balance to meet the needs of the current school year and get students back on their paramedic track, with the intent to renegotiate for future years. He acknowledged that it would be good for the City to get more in return for what was being provided and that they want to support the program. He noted that if the FFU membership did not vote in favor of the agreement, there would not be any reason for the Council to consider it further.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if the students could get the required hours from other fire departments within the Borough. Chief Cocco explained that it is difficult for them to go through other departments as those entities do not require paramedics to be on duty on a regular basis, whereas the City does. He added that the City is the only place the school can send students where there will be consistent paramedic supervision provided.

Mr. Cleworth asked to confirm that the cost would be a one-time expenditure. Chief Cocco confirmed that it would just be for the current school year, with City staff working again with the college to discuss whether a long-term agreement could be reached. He described the possible ways the university could provide something of value to the City in return for the arrangement.

Mr. Ringstad expressed concern about the timing and duration of the request in relation to the school year, with the budget for the current and upcoming year, and that the FFU membership still had not voted on the LOA. Chief Cocco pointed out that the ordinance was only before the Council as a first reading and that there would be more opportunities to discuss it in an upcoming work session and the next Council meeting. **Mr. Ringstad** asked if anything the Council did at the moment would make a difference. Chief of Staff Sanders explained that if the ordinance was delayed, the current students would essentially have no way to complete the required 240 hours of externship before the end of the school year.

Mr. Marney asked if it was known whether any of the students would stay in Fairbanks. Chief Cocco stated that it was hard to know where they may go.

Ms. Tidwell recounted that N. Clark had earlier shared that there was only about a 50% chance the FFU membership would approve the LOA. She recommended the Council advance the ordinance and, if needed, discuss it further at the next work session.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if the funds would come from the 2025 or 2026 budget. M. Sanders explained that some would come from the current year while the rest would be part of the 2026 budget.

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the motion to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6330 and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

a) 2026 City Council Meeting Schedule

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to APPROVE the 2026 City Council Meeting Schedule.

Ms. Therrien discussed the dates for Council meetings in December, noting the obligation to adopt a budget for 2027 no later than December 15, 2026. She acknowledged that the second week of December is typically when the Alaska Municipal League (AML) holds its annual conference but suggested the Council prioritize the budget process timeline over any potential conflicts.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Mr. Cleworth**, moved to AMEND the 2026 City Council Meeting Schedule by changing the December meeting dates from the 14th and 21st to the 7th and 14th.

Mr. Cleworth asked if the dates of the 2026 AML conference could be confirmed. Clerk Snider stated that she would find out and report back to the Council. She pointed out that the Council could amend its meeting schedule at any time during the coming year.

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the motion to AMEND the 2026 City Council Meeting Schedule by changing the December meeting dates from the 14th and 21st to the 7th and 14th and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the motion to APPROVE the 2026 City Council Meeting Schedule, as Amended, and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

b) Councilmember Appointments to City and Community Boards and Commissions

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to APPROVE Councilmember Appointments to City and Community Boards and Commissions.

Mr. Ringstad expressed concern with the removal of Mr. Cleworth from the Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST) Planning Policy Board, given Mr. Cleworth's institutional knowledge and current role as the board chair. He stated that it is advantageous for the City to have Mr. Cleworth's experience in that position.

Mr. Cleworth discussed the history of the formerly named Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS) and how they eventually formed the FAST Planning entity as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the urban areas of the Borough and cities of Fairbanks and North Pole. He described how the organization had been formed, with a deliberately crafted board, committee, and staff structure, which allowed the City of Fairbanks to have a significant voice at the table, as well as having to create all governing documents, personnel codes, and more from scratch. **Mr. Cleworth** stated that it had been the most complicated process he had ever been involved with, particularly due to the extensive 15-page list of acronyms used for various entities and programs as well as meeting agenda packets that are regularly over 100 pages long. He reported that with his current position, it was the first time the City of Fairbanks had ever had a representative serve as the chair, noting that the role is typically held by someone from the Borough or State. He indicated that he would like to continue to serve on the board but would accept the will of the Council either way. **Mr. Cleworth** shared that the length of service is fairly short for the majority of current Policy Board members and that they rely heavily on the knowledge of staff and the Technical Committee, which included individuals such as City Engineer Bob Pristash. He reported that he had seen many people come and go and that there is often a sense of being overwhelmed by members due to the complexity of FAST Planning issues.

Mr. Ringstad asked how the City is represented on the Policy Board. **Mr. Cleworth** explained that the City's two seats include the Mayor and one appointed Councilmember.

Ms. Tidwell stated that when she was elected in 2022, she had really wanted to represent the City on FAST Planning and that her predecessor on the City Council had been the appointed individual. She reported that she had asked the former mayor to be appointed but was turned down. **Ms. Tidwell** shared that when Mayor O'Neill had indicated that some committee assignments would be shuffled, she asked to be considered for the FAST Planning Policy Board. She pointed out that her background is in construction, that it is an area she is passionate about, and that she would like the opportunity to serve the City well as Mr. Cleworth had for many years.

Mr. Marney asked how many years Mr. Cleworth had been involved with FAST Planning. **Mr. Cleworth** stated that it was between 9 and 12 years, off and on. **Mr. Marney** pointed out Mr. Cleworth's significant amount of experience. He acknowledged that Ms. Tidwell would be very capable but that Mr. Cleworth's role as chair was very valuable. **Mr. Cleworth** clarified that the chair serves for one year and that whether he is reappointed or not, the chair selection process would occur in December. He noted that the Borough Mayor is the current vice chair.

Mr. Ringstad moved to AMEND the Councilmember Appointments to City and Community Boards and Commissions by having Mr. Cleworth remain on the FAST Planning Policy Board.

Clerk Snider explained that the rule for appointment to this particular board was that the Mayor has the authority to appoint any Councilmember they choose but that such appointment requires confirmation by the Council. She clarified that the Council had the discretion to confirm or not confirm the appointee but could not make a specific selection for an alternate appointee. She indicated that, in this sense, Mr. Ringstad's motion would be out of order.

Mr. Cleworth acknowledged that the only two appointments in the list that the Council had discretion over were those to the Permanent Fund Review Board and FAST Planning Policy Board. He expressed concern with there not having been consensus among the Councilmembers prior to

assignments being made as had been done in the past. He noted that a year ago, Ms. Sprinkle had voiced a desire to be on the Finance Committee but none of the existing appointees wanted to be replaced, so they amended the Fairbanks General Code to allow for an additional Councilmember seat to accommodate the request. He stated that he wished the process had been more collaborative and added that when he met with the Mayor, there had been no discussion about committees.

Ms. Therrien asked to confirm that the only option was to concur or not concur with the entire list of appointments. **Mr. Ringstad** pointed out that the Council does not have authority over the anything other than the two specified appointments but that the question could be split. **Mayor O'Neill** confirmed that the Council could split the question.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to DIVIDE THE QUESTION by considering the appointments for the Permanent Fund Review Board and FAST Planning Policy Board separately.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO SPLIT THE QUESTION BY CONSIDERING THE APPOINTMENTS FOR THE PERMANENT FUND REVIEW BOARD AND FAST PLANNING POLICY BOARD SEPARATELY AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Marney, Ringstad, Cleworth, Therrien

NAYS: Sprinkle, Tidwell

Mayor O'Neill declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Ringstad, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to APPROVE the appointment of Ms. Therrien to the Permanent Fund Review Board.

Mayor O'Neill called for objection to the motion to APPROVE the appointment of Ms. Therrien to the Permanent Fund Review Board and, hearing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Tidwell**, moved to APPROVE the appointment of Ms. Tidwell to the FAST Planning Policy Board.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF MS. TIDWELL TO THE FAST PLANNING POLICY BOARD AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Therrien, Sprinkle, Tidwell, O'Neill

NAYS: Ringstad, Marney, Cleworth

Mayor O'Neill declared the MOTION CARRIED.

c) Permanent Fund Review Board Meeting Minutes of July 30, 2025

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

d) Chena Riverfront Commission Special Meeting Minutes of June 10, 2025

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- e) Chena Riverfront Commission Meeting Minutes of July 23, 2025

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- f) Clay Street Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes of October 1, 2025

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Therrien provided a report on the Permanent Fund Review Board, noting that as of October 28, 2025, the account balance was \$171,946,153. She discussed the returns on the various classes of investments and other details about the processes in place for management and review of the Fund. She shared that the board had evaluated the benefits and concerns with a potential investment in private equity and that they would have further discussion on the topic at the next board meeting.

Mr. Cleworth discussed the stipulations in place with the investment classes of the Permanent Fund and concerns about how those are adhered to. **Mayor O'Neill** ruled Mr. Cleworth's comments out of order, citing the concern of getting into detailed discussions on the topic of the Permanent Fund without having provided notice to the public. **Mr. Cleworth** stated that he disagreed with the ruling as the topic had already been introduced by Ms. Therrien and he was providing Councilmember Comments. **Mayor O'Neill** reiterated that her ruling was based on the matter not being noticed on the agenda. **Mr. Cleworth** asked how Councilmembers could provide any comments during their comments if what members say was not publicly noticed. **Mayor O'Neill** explained that the difference was that he was attempting to engage in a detailed discussion about the topic, noting that it would not be inappropriate if he had a specific question for Ms. Therrien regarding her report.

Ms. Therrien expressed appreciation for the productive discussion on Resolution No. 5192. She apologized that background information had not been included in the packet.

Mr. Cleworth stated that he believes it would be beneficial to ask the Permanent Fund Review Board, through Ms. Therrien, to consider amending the Fairbanks General Code on the City's investment policy to allow for more liberal strategies. He provided historical information about the range of returns for the Fund over the years and gave justification for his suggestion. **Ms. Therrien** stated that she could bring the idea to the board.

Ms. Sprinkle addressed the issue of problematic properties and the meetings with department heads to discuss the status of each property. She expressed frustration that properties often tend to fall off the radar, only to come back into the spotlight through citizen input such as D. Hayden's comments earlier in the meeting. She stated that she does not understand why the City allows clear violations to continue as long as they do and that she would like to see things improve.

Mr. Ringstad discussed the different approach to permanent funds from the time they are created to later when they can afford higher risk investments. He pointed out that the growth in the City's Permanent Fund is providing the City with nearly 15% of its annual budget and that he agrees that a periodic review of the investment policy would be prudent.

Mr. Marney stated that he had no report or comments.

Ms. Tidwell asked if youth sports teams that had been previously used the gym in the former Boys & Girls Club space would be able to enter into an LOA to continue to use the space. Chief of Staff Sanders reported that the Interior Youth Basketball group has an agreement with the Club and can continue to use the gym until the lease ends on November 30. He shared that at that time the City would resume control of the area. He explained that the City will not be able to publish a request for proposal for any future tenants until the space is cleaned up and repairs are done. He stated that things are not being turned over to the City in good condition and that while he has one company interested in touring the space, the process will take some time. **Mr. Cleworth** suggested that there are many local organizations that would be interested in utilizing indoor space like the gym.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk Snider reported that City Hall would be closed the following day, Tuesday, November 11, in recognition of Veterans Day, and that the Discretionary Fund Committee would hold its preliminary meeting on Wednesday.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT


Attorney Chard shared that he would be out of town for the remainder of the week but would be accessible by phone if anyone needed to reach him.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor O'Neill declared the meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.


MINDY O'NEALL, MAYOR

ATTEST:


D. DANYELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: CC