



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, MARCH 31, 2025  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

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The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date to conduct a Regular Meeting of the Fairbanks City Council via Zoom webinar and in the City Council Chambers located at 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, with Mayor David Pruhs presiding and the following Councilmembers in attendance:

Councilmembers Present: Valerie Therrien, Seat B  
Sue Sprinkle, Seat C  
Crystal Tidwell, Seat D  
Lonny Marney, Seat E  
John Ringstad, Seat F

Absent: Jerry Cleworth, Seat A (excused)

Also Present: D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk  
Thomas Chard, City Attorney  
Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff  
Ron Dupee, Police Chief (remotely)  
Richard Sweet, Deputy Police Chief  
Nathan Werner, Police Captain  
Andrew Coccoaro, Fire Chief  
Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer  
Jennifer Payan, Accounting Specialist (remotely)  
Robert Pristash, City Engineer  
Jake Merritt, Human Resources Director (remotely)  
Jeremiah Cotter, Public Works Director  
Brynn Butler, Housing Coordinator (remotely)  
Brenda McFarlane, Crisis Now Coordinator

**INVOCATION**

The invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

**FLAG SALUTATION**

At the request of Mayor Pruhs, City Intern Zoey Chen led the flag salutation.

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

Chief of Staff Michael Sanders recognized Skye Kaquatosh, a student from West Valley High School, who recently completed a 60-hour internship with the Mayor's Office. He reviewed the numerous tasks, meetings, and events in which she participated. S. Kaquatosh shared insights

gained during her internship. She expressed appreciation for the Mayor, Chief of Staff, and City Clerk, for their support during her time at City Hall.

Chief Financial Officer Margarita Bell recognized Zoey Chen who had just completed a 20-hour internship on governmental accounting practices. She reviewed the projects in which Z. Chen had participated with the Finance Department during the internship.

**Mayor Pruhs** thanked S. Kaquatosh and Z. Chen for their service and wished them success in their academic and professional pursuits.

### **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.]*

Bill Wright, Director of Tourism and Meeting Sales for Explore Fairbanks – B. Wright discussed the various tours and site visits that Explore Fairbanks had conducted in recent months. He shared that they had hosted over 100 professionals for the annual Heritage and Cultural Tourism Conference, noting that this was the first time the conference had been held outside of Sitka, Alaska in its over 20-year history. B. Wright reviewed Explore Fairbanks' sales efforts within and outside of the country. He concluded with a report of slight year-to-date increases over 2024 in hotel occupancy and daily rates.

Robert Poland – R. Poland expressed concern with Resolution No. 5166. He shared that he had worked for the Emergency Service Patrol (ESP) for seven years and had insight on what the program entails. He suggested that the bid recommended for award would not be a sustainable amount to facilitate the required services and that there is a reason the other two bidders came in higher. He stated that he felt compelled to bring the issue to the Council's attention.

**Mr. Ringstad** asked R. Poland if he believed the coverage area should be revised. R. Poland indicated that he believes the defined coverage area is adequate, noting that only about 25% of the City, the northwest portion, is not covered. He explained that they had calls all over Fairbanks except in the northwest quadrant.

**Mr. Marney** asked R. Poland if he had submitted a bid. R. Poland stated that he had not, only that he previously worked for Securitas, which provided ESP personnel in the past.

Victor Buberger – V. Buberger acknowledged the significance of the recent settlement of the *Roberts v. City of Fairbanks* legal case and suggested other things that the City could have used the funds for. He discussed the Polaris Building and whether the Polaris Group will ultimately purchase the property. He stated that the Mayor has considerable political clout within the state and expressed the hope that a casino could be established in the downtown area as a way to bring more revenue into the community. V. Buberger wondered if taxpayers could then receive dividends from the revenue rather than having to pay property taxes. He claimed that he has spoken to many tourists over the years and that the liveliness that existed during the pipeline construction years could return if they get a casino downtown.



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

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA**

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

**Mr. Marney** pulled item 12(b), Resolution No. 5166, from the consent agenda.

**Mr. Ringstad** pulled item 12(c), Resolution No. 5167, from the consent agenda.

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

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

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2025

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

### **SPECIAL ORDERS**

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

<b>Lic. #</b>	<b>DBA</b>	<b>License Type</b>	<b>Licensee</b>	<b>Address</b>
270	Lavelle's Taphouse	Beverage Dispensary	Lavelle's Taphouse, LLC	414 2nd Avenue, B

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

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

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

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

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- b) The Fairbanks City Council considered the question of whether to veto the decision of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Platting Board to rename a portion of Van Horn Road to East Van Horn Road.

NR002-25: An application by the Fairbanks North Star Borough Emergency Operations Department to rename the portion of Van Horn Road that lies between South Cushman Street Extension and Easy Street to East Van Horn Road.

**Mayor Pruhs** explained that no action is necessary if the Council's intent is to support the change and that the consent of the City Council is assumed if no veto is received by the Borough by April 18, 2025. He noted that Kellen Spillman, Director of Community Planning with the Fairbanks North Star Borough, was available via Zoom to provide more information.

K. Spillman shared that this action was considered somewhat of a formality as some databases and resources already refer to addresses in the subject area with the "East Van Horn Road" designation. He explained that this is the legal method to make the change official and that only two properties would require address updates.

**Mayor Pruhs** asked if there was a motion to veto the Platting Board's decision and, hearing none, declared the matter concluded. He thanked K. Spillman for being available for questions.

**Mr. Ringstad** pointed out that the west end of Van Horn Road used to be named Cartwright Road.

**Mr. Marney** asked for clarification of the fire and road service status for the area. **Mayor Pruhs** confirmed that East Van Horn is part of the road, fire, and ambulance service areas for the City.

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

**Mayor Pruhs** thanked Public Works Director Jeremiah Cotter for handling multiple issues recently that were not the direct responsibility of the City. He gave examples of problems involving Borough trash receptacles and parks as well as State-owned property that needed cleaned up. He acknowledged that the City does a lot that is not required, because it is the right thing to do and it makes the community better. He thanked the Public Works crews for their efforts. **Mayor Pruhs** shared that letters would soon go out regarding blighted properties and abatement. He confirmed there would be public notices and that the City is on schedule to accomplish major improvements over the course of the summer. He asked City Engineer Bob Pristash to provide an update on the public restroom planned for installation, referred to as a "Portland Loo."

B. Pristash shared that sewer service was completed in 2024 at the site and that a bid opening for the remaining installation work was scheduled for the following day.

**Mr. Ringstad** asked if there was an expected completion date. B. Pristash explained that they can begin as soon as the ground thaws. He noted that there was a recent leak on 1st Avenue but that three weeks to a month should be a reasonable timeframe for project completion.

#### **COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Ms. Therrien** indicated she had no comments.

**Ms. Sprinkle** shared that she was invited to attend a housing symposium by the Cold Climate Housing Research Center. She reported that the event was well-attended, with representatives from



all three of Alaska's Congressional offices. She stated that she is impressed by the number of people who want to help with the housing situation facing Fairbanks.

**Ms. Tidwell** asked if, given the presence of builders at the symposium, there had been discussion regarding incentives for building within the Fairbanks area. **Ms. Sprinkle** shared that the majority of the event involved asking those very people how they could be encouraged and supported to build new structures and renovate existing structures within the area.

**Mr. Marney** asked if there would be a follow-up meeting from the symposium. **Ms. Sprinkle** confirmed that several parties expressed interest in reconnecting to continue the discussion and that she would share any future updates. She noted that no Borough Assemblymembers had attended and that a large concern was the local shortage of people in the building trades.

**Mr. Ringstad** indicated he had no comments.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Resolution No. 5165 – A Resolution Awarding a Contract to Colaska, Inc. (dba Exclusive Paving) for 4th Avenue and State Street Storm Drain Extension Project in the Amount of \$339,913. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- b) Resolution No. 5166 – A Resolution Awarding a Contract to Fairbanks Integrated Services for the Emergency Service Patrol Program. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

**Mr. Marney**, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5166.

**Mr. Marney** stated he had several questions about the proposed plan and asked if the Fairbanks Integrated Community Services (FICS) representative could testify.

**Ms. Sprinkle** asked why it was being put forth as a resolution instead of an ordinance. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that the Council had previously given approval for sending out a request for proposals (RFP) on the project and that approving the award of the contract was the next step.

**Mayor Pruhs** invited Anthony Mosinski from FICS to answer Councilmember questions.

**Mr. Marney** asked for more details about expected staffing and the coverage area. A. Mosinski shared that the RFP was put out for 8-hour shifts, 365 days a year, for two individuals at a time. He reported that they have two staff members to start, with a goal of reaching five in total. He stated that the contract, as awarded, only referenced calls within the City of Fairbanks. **Mr. Marney** asked A. Mosinski what he believes that includes. A. Mosinski indicated that he previously worked for the Mobile Crisis Team, which serviced the entire Borough, and that he understands City limits to be a smaller area. He acknowledged that the contract would include the major retail business locations. **Mr. Marney** noted that documents indicate that they would not be

using any weapons. A. Mosinski confirmed that they do not intend to use weapons and would focus instead on verbal de-escalation with motivational interviewing, through the Assertive Community Treatment model, an evidence-based treatment approach for serious mental illness, substance abuse, and homelessness. **Mr. Marney** pointed out that there were two recent stabbing incidents in the downtown area and asked how FICS would handle such a situation. A. Mosinski indicated that he would follow the same protocol as his previous experience with 911 interactions and that if confronted with a violent situation, FICS staff would immediately call law enforcement and maintain a safe distance.

**Mr. Ringstad** asked A. Mosinski if FICS would be prepared to take such calls. A. Mosinski confirmed that he performs scene safety and risk assessment trainings to first responders across the state and that FICS would follow the same guidelines. **Mr. Ringstad** asked for more details on staffing. A. Mosinski explained that there are two individuals already, with two more ready to go upon contract award. He added they would like to fill one more position to help with shift coverage.

**Ms. Sprinkle** asked for clarification on language within the documents that suggested two people for 12 hours per day, whereas A. Mosinski's comments indicated only 8 hours per day. CFO Bell explained that the fiscal note was drafted to reflect the contract beginning at an amount commensurate with FICS's current staffing level and increasing once they have more personnel. A. Mosinski added that they also intend to pursue Medicaid billing eligibility which may allow them to expand service hours without additional cost to the City. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if the vehicle previously used by the ESP was going to be made available to FICS. A. Mosinski stated that to his understanding, that vehicle was included in the agreement for use by FICS.

**Mr. Marney** asked about the source of the \$100,000 grant referenced in the fiscal note. CFO Bell explained that \$75,000 of it is passthrough funds from local businesses, paid by the Downtown Association of Fairbanks (DAF), and the remaining \$25,000 comes from the Fairbanks North Star Borough. She added that the annual budget includes a certain amount each year through the General Fund. **Mr. Marney** asked if there had been communication with the DAF regarding the continuation of funding. CFO Bell stated that a contract is in place and that she is not aware of any changes from the DAF regarding program funding. **Mr. Marney** asked if A. Mosinski had spoken with Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) about their plans. A. Mosinski indicated that he has not yet done so regarding the potential contract but that he has engaged with all of the City's emergency services departments in his previous work. **Mr. Marney** emphasized the importance of connecting with those departments.

**Mr. Ringstad** expressed support for the program and encouraged continued communication with the Council to share successes and challenges as things proceed. A. Mosinski stated that they believe strongly in data transparency and intend to make information publicly available. He committed to sharing details with the Council.

**Ms. Sprinkle** noted that the DAF paid its obligation to the ESP program the previous year even though the service was not available. She stated that shows DAF's commitment to the program.

**Ms. Therrien** asked if any funds had been received from the local Alaska Native organizations. CFO Bell stated that she can request an updated list of funding contributors from the DAF to share



with the Council. **Ms. Therrien** reported that at the last DAF meeting, she heard that at least a few thousand dollars had been contributed by local Alaska Native organizations.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5166 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Ringstad, Sprinkle, Therrien, Tidwell

NAYS: Marney

ABSENT: Cleworth

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5166 APPROVED.

- c) Resolution No. 5167 – A Resolution Approving a Maintenance Agreement with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities for 8th Avenue, Doyon Estates, and Tesoro Avenue. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

**Ms. Sprinkle**, seconded by **Ms. Tidwell**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5166.

**Mr. Ringstad** asked for clarification on why the agreement was being pursued. City Engineer Bob Pristash explained that anytime the City spends federal money through the Department of Transportation, a maintenance agreement is required. He clarified that they already maintain the roads and that would not change. He noted that the City's maintenance cost will actually go down.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5167 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Tidwell, Sprinkle, Ringstad, Marney, Therrien

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Cleworth

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5167 APPROVED.

- d) Ordinance No. 6312 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Sec. 14-433 Rotation Tow List Eligibility Requirements and Amending the City's Tow Rotation List Schedule of Fees and Charges for Services. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA

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

- a) Memorandum Approving the Reallocation of Capital Funds for the Joyce Street Storm Drain Extension Project.

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

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

**Ms. Sprinkle** reported that she attended the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors meeting and that it was a positive event. She added that she would be attending the Chamber's Government Relations Committee meeting the following morning where they will discuss State legislative bills.

**Ms. Therrien** shared that she and Mr. Cleworth will meet with the Mayor soon to review sections of the Fairbanks General Code (FGC) that deal with alcohol and marijuana licensing. She noted that the Legislative Committee will likely meet in two weeks. She stated that she hopes to have a discussion at the next work session regarding current oil and gas legislation. **Ms. Therrien** reported that she will be traveling to Juneau in mid-April and that there could be time to put together a resolution regarding the Council's position on the issue prior to her trip.

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

**Mr. Marney** stated that he was fortunate to be the City representative at the last Borough Assembly meeting and shared that May 10 has been suggested as a tentative date for the two bodies to come together for the friendly bowling match previously agreed upon. He discussed the difference in decorum that he has perceived between meetings of the City Council and those of the Borough Assembly, noting that 25 to 30 individuals came to the Assembly meeting to speak harshly against a particular member of the body. **Mr. Marney** stated that he would not have been able to sit silently as dozens of people spoke rudely to his fellow elected officials and expressed gratitude that he was serving on the Council and not the Assembly.

**Ms. Tidwell** shared that there would be a meeting of the Economic Development Commission happening soon.

**Mayor Pruhs** shared details about a public testimony session on SB 81, a bill being considered in Juneau that would equate to an increase of \$890,000 in the City's contribution to the Alaska Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). He encouraged those who are able to testify against the change to do so. He stated that he agrees with Mr. Marney's thoughts about the Council and that he shared at the recent Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors meeting that it is a pleasure to work with the Council. He expressed his belief that the Fairbanks City Council is a shining example across the state of how a governing body can and should operate. **Mayor Pruhs** discussed the upcoming bowling match with the Borough Assembly.

**Ms. Therrien** stated that she hopes things will not be as bad when it is her turn to represent the City at the next Borough Assembly meeting.

## **CITY CLERK'S REPORT**

Clerk Snider shared that City Hall would be closed the coming Friday for a Records Maintenance workday and staff training.

## **CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

Attorney Chard indicated that he had nothing to report.



## EXECUTIVE SESSION

**Mr. Ringstad**, seconded by **Ms. Tidwell**, moved to ENTER into an Executive Session to discuss Fairbanks Firefighters Union/City of Fairbanks Arbitration: Direction from Council.

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

**Mayor Pruhs** called for a brief recess. The Council reconvened in Executive Session at 7:31 p.m.

- a) Fairbanks Firefighters Union/City of Fairbanks Arbitration: Direction from Council [permissible under State law, including the provision at AS 44.62.310(c)(1)] *(ended at 8:00 p.m.)*


**Mr. Ringstad** stated that the Council met in an Executive Session to give direction on the Fairbanks Firefighters Union/City of Fairbanks Arbitration. Direction was given, and no action was taken.

## ADJOURNMENT

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

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

**Mayor Pruhs** declared the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.



DAVID PRUHS, MAYOR

ATTEST:



D. DANYELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: CC