



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, JULY 14, 2025
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date to conduct a Regular Meeting of the Fairbanks City Council via Zoom webinar and in City Council Chambers at 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, with Mayor David Pruhs 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
 Paul Ewers, Acting Deputy City Attorney
 Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff
 Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer
 Jake Merritt, Human Resources Director
 Ron Dupee, Police Chief (remotely)
 Richard Sweet, Deputy Police Chief
 Andrew Coccaro, Fire Chief
 Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely)
 Christoph Falke, Building Official
 Jeremiah Cotter, Public Works Director
 Robert Pristash, City Engineer
 Jennifer Payan, Accounting Specialist (remotely)

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

FLAG SALUTATION

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

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

[Clerk Note: Names of citizens who provide comments may not be spelled correctly if their name was illegible on the physical sign-up sheet.]

Jomo Stewart, President/CEO of Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation (FEDC) – J. Stewart provided copies of the annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs), which FEDC led the process for the first time and thanked those who had participated in the process. He shared that the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Assembly officially approved its support of FEDC becoming the Alaska Regional Development Organization (ARDOR) and that the FEDC has one remaining support document to gather. He provided details for the upcoming Alaska Defense Forum, scheduled for late August.

Ms. Sprinkle asked for a summary of the big takeaways from the CEDs. J. Stewart stated that after participating in 12 of the 14 roundtable discussions, one thing that stood out was comments from the head nurse at the school district who shared serious concerns about understaffing. He stated that the healthcare capacity of schools had never been a topic of focus for this project before and that it was an enlightening conversation.

Mr. Marney asked how long it should take for FEDC to receive the final support document. J. Stewart stated the FEDC could submit an application to the State with the nine resolutions already received; he indicated that he did not want to rush the final entity. He stated that once the application is ready for submittal, they will proceed even if they do not have the last resolution. He confirmed that the FEDC would forward the final letter regardless of whether it was supportive.

Victor Buberger – V. Buberger shared written comments from a friend who reported that employees at the Safeway grocery store by the Bentley Mall do not feel safe. The letter discussed how in the evenings there is only one entrance and exit, and there is no security and that derelicts hang outside the door asking people to purchase alcohol for them. V. Buberger suggested that there are little-to-no repercussions for shoplifters and that his friend claims the Mayor changed a law to loosen the rules regarding trespassing, which he would like to see changed back.

Mayor Pruhs stated that he is unaware of what is being referred to and asked V. Buberger to invite any concerned individual to reach out to his office directly. He added that an update on street lighting would be provided at the next meeting.

Mayor Pruhs, 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.

Mr. Marney pulled item 12(a), Resolution No. 5179, from the consent agenda.

Ms. Sprinkle pulled item 12(g), Ordinance No. 6321, 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 June 9, 2025

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of June 23, 2025

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

SPECIAL ORDERS

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

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
4504	The Venue	Beverage Dispensary	Go Alaska Media, LLC	514 2nd Avenue
5950	House of Fire Pizza	Restaurant/ Eating Place	TJMN, LLC	300 Old Steese Highway, Suite 1

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

Mr. Marney asked if the address for The Venue was correct, noting that they were moving to a location on Third Avenue. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that the transfer is still in progress.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if House of Fire Pizza was open again for business. **Mayor Pruhs** noted that there was a fire in the building some time ago but he believes they have reopened.

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 APPLICATIONS FOR RENEWAL AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT

Mayor Pruhs stated that he had no comments or report.

COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Marney indicated he had no comments.

Ms. Therrien gave a land acknowledgement. She referenced Resolution No. 5181 and asked if the Gavoras had agreed to the landscaping plans. **Mayor Pruhs** stated that is not yet known, but the parties recently met and would be speaking with the City Engineer soon.

Mr. Cleworth, **Ms. Sprinkle**, and **Ms. Tidwell** each indicated they had no comments.

Mr. Ringstad shared that he was recently assaulted and gave recognition to Fairbanks Emergency Communications Center (FECC) Dispatchers Jackie Conrad and Kaleigh Sparks, as well as Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) Officers Chris Zenyuch and Sean Lai for their quick and professional response. He reported recently seeing someone using the new designated bike lane along Barnette Street, although the biker ran three red lights in the short time he observed them.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Ordinance No. 6316 – An Ordinance Establishing a Paramedic Recruitment Bonus Program. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs and Councilmember Tidwell. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

Ms. Tidwell, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6316.

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

Mr. Marney admitted that he had been on the fence regarding the ordinance. He share that he visits each department weekly and was astounded after his last visit with Fire Chief Coccaro to learn of the Fairbanks Fire Department's (FFD) success rate in saving lives. He asked for that information to be shared with the Council. Chief Coccaro reported that, so far in 2025, FFD staff has restored a pulse in 83% of the cardiac arrest incidents they responded to.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if paramedics are the only personnel involved in those calls or if EMTs also participate. Chief Coccaro explained that while the FFD is also proud of its EMTs, a paramedic can provide the highest level of care in the industry. He stated that places without paramedics do not typically have as much success saving lives as those that do.

Ms. Therrien asked to be added as a sponsor to the ordinance.

Mr. Marney spoke in support of the ordinance, noting that if it fails to attract candidates it would cost the City nothing; however, if it does attract candidates, it would be well worth it.

Mr. Cleworth stated that he would likely not support the ordinance. He noted that the FFD already has 17 paramedics and 11 advanced EMTs (AEMT), which equates to 28 staff members capable of providing high-level medical care during emergencies and that a lot of resources went into getting those personnel. He acknowledged that the FFD operates three ambulances that each require a paramedic, according to the union contract. He pointed out that with three shifts, a total of nine paramedics are needed each day, and asked why 17 is not sufficient. **Mr. Cleworth** asserted that the problem was one of logistics – not staffing. He reported that he had spoken with individuals at FNSB and the University Fire Department to gain a better understanding of the requirements for ambulance staffing across different service areas in the region. He shared that most require

only an EMT-2, although some employ EMT-3s. He stated that not many have AEMTs, which rank higher than EMT-3s; he added that both entities have virtually no paramedics. He pointed out that the other agencies also have much greater areas to cover and distances to potentially travel on a given call, compared to FFD's service area. **Mr. Cleworth** asked why, logistically, the FFD could not make it work with its current staffing. He suggested that the real problem is the contractual staffing obligations and that similar problems at the FPD are handled without triggering massive overtime costs due to the flexibility granted to management in the police's union contract. He asked for more details on how captain positions are scheduled, particularly about what happens when a captain/paramedic is used to staff an ambulance. Chief Cocco explained that using a captain/paramedic to fill a spot on an ambulance is a much more expensive option than using a firefighter/paramedic. **Mr. Cleworth** asserted that it is misleading to say the FFD is short on paramedics and reiterated that the problem is contractual and logistical. He expressed frustration with the system, stating that it was a typical governmental situation of a manufactured problem resulting in people thinking the only solution is to throw more money at it.

Ms. Sprinkle asked to be added as a sponsor to the ordinance.

Mayor Pruhs explained that the City will start 2026 trying to fill nine new emergency services positions and that, recently, 34 applicants resulted in onboarding four new firefighters, although none had paramedic training. He explained that City will try to attract paramedics for the remaining five positions. He noted that the incentive program would expire at the end of 2025, so there were only five and a half months to try it out. He added that bonuses would be funded by salary savings.

Mr. Ringstad expressed mixed feelings about the ordinance but recognized the importance of reaching the staffing levels budgeted in 2025. He discussed target-based budgeting and pointed out that the Council has not had the discussion on what base level of service it wants to see across every department. He suggested that such a conversation would be important and that the Council should avoid getting the cart before the horse. He questioned whether the department has to be the best in the nation or if that is an unnecessarily high expectation.

Ms. Therrien asked how much time it might take to find and hire for the five positions. Chief Cocco gave a summary of the recruitment and hiring process and timeline. He stated that he hopes to have everyone in place and trained by January, which would help reduce overtime at the start of 2026. **Ms. Therrien** asked if it would be helpful to add six months to the ordinance sunset date. Chief Cocco noted that the bonuses would be funded with 2025 salary savings and that he was unsure how that would work going into a new year. He suggested the City make a big push now and stated that he could come back to the Council by January if the program is unsuccessful. **Ms. Therrien** expressed concern about the December 31, 2025 sunset date. **Mayor Pruhs** indicated that they should leave budgeting for 2026 to the designated timeframe later in the year.

Ms. Tidwell asked how many applicants in the current round of hiring had paramedic training. Human Resources Director Jake Merritt reported that the posting had been up since the beginning of July and, of the six current applicants, none were higher than an EMT-1.

Mr. Marney posed the question of how much a life is worth, and, in response, **Mr. Cleworth** suggested that the same sentiment could also be used for police and dispatchers, but the Council must deal with the reality of budgeting. He explained that any remaining salary savings at the end

of each year is the only real revenue that typically goes towards capital needs, such as equipment. He recounted how the 2025 budget had included nothing for FFD capital. He suggested that will all the FFD's current paramedics and AEMTs, it has the highest quality of care and services of any agency within the borough or state, and maybe the nation.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6316 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Marney, Sprinkle, Therrien, Tidwell

NAYS: Ringstad, Cleworth

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6316 ADOPTED.

- b) Ordinance No. 6317 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code, Chapter 22, Elections. Introduced by Councilmember Cleworth and Mayor Pruhs. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6317.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to AMEND Ordinance No. 6317 by substituting the amended, proposed version.

Mayor Pruhs called for objection to the motion to AMEND Ordinance No. 6317 by substituting the amended, proposed version and, seeing none, declared the MOTION CARRIED.

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

Mr. Cleworth thanked City Clerk Snider for the work she put into the many technical but prudent updates to the Fairbanks General Code and reviewed a few examples in the ordinance.

Mayor Pruhs commended Clerk Snider for taking time to draft the changes and Mr. Cleworth for giving the ordinance a thorough review.

Ms. Sprinkle stated that she takes elections very seriously and recognizes how big of a job it was to draft the ordinance. She expressed appreciation that Clerk Snider collaborated with the FNSB Clerk to ensure consistency wherever appropriate.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6317, AS AMENDED, AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6317, as Amended, ADOPTED.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Resolution No. 5179 – A Resolution Amending the City Schedule of Fees and Charges for Services by Adjusting Fees for Consumer Price Index (CPI) Changes. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

Ms. Tidwell, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 5179.

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5179 by increasing the fee associated with Code Sec. 70-161(f) from \$210 to \$250.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 5179 BY INCREASING THE FEE ASSOCIATED WITH CODE SEC. 70-161(f) FROM \$210 TO \$250 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Marney, Ringstad, Sprinkle, Tidwell

NAYS: Therrien

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5179, as Amended, by increasing the fee associated with Code Sec. 70-162 from \$210 to \$250.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 5179, AS AMENDED, BY INCREASING THE FEE ASSOCIATED WITH CODE SEC. 70-162 FROM \$210 TO \$250 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Ringstad, Tidwell, Therrien, Sprinkle, Marney

NAYS: Cleworth

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5179, as Amended, by increasing the fee associated with Code Sec. 66-42 for “Improper containment or disposal of household medical wastes [sharps]” from \$250 to \$400.

Mr. Marney asked if Public Works Director Jeremiah Cotter could address the Council, as most of his questions and concerns were about fees associated with that department. He asked for input regarding the danger of improperly disposed syringes. J. Cotter explained that the impact on an employee’s life after being stuck by a needle in the course of their duties is incredibly traumatic, and the employee must immediately seek medical care to conduct blood testing then wait for results, which could be life-altering. He shared that employees who are regularly exposed to that risk would like to see the fee be much higher, in recognition of the significance of the issue.

Mr. Ringstad asked where the primary source of the risks occurs. J. Cotter stated that it is from private residences where individuals may toss a used needle into a regular bag of trash. **Mr. Ringstad** declared such an action as unacceptable, and J. Cotter agreed.

Ms. Tidwell asked if the City covers all costs related to the medical care that is needed following a needle incident. J. Cotter stated that the City covers the costs. **Ms. Tidwell** asked what process

is used to collect the fee if an individual does not pay it. Chief Financial Officer Margarita Bell explained that the fee would be tied into the individual's garbage collection bill which, if unpaid, can result in a lien against their property or being sent to collections. She added that the City could also pursue a small claims case which may result in a Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) garnishment. **Ms. Tidwell** noted that a lien would only impact the owner of a property, not a tenant, and asked if that would still be the case. CFO Bell stated that was correct.

Mr. Marney pointed out that the City provides sharps containers upon request. J. Cotter confirmed that the program to bring an appropriate container to any individual requesting one has been in place for a few years, works very well, and has reduced the number of incidents.

Mr. Cleworth noted that the fee being discussed pertained to medical waste, particularly sharps, or syringes. He asked what items are related to the next fee in the schedule, which refers to "hazardous wastes." J. Cotter explained that hazardous waste includes materials such as paints, solvents, excrement, etc. **Mr. Cleworth** asked which category broken glass would fall under. J. Cotter replied that glass is considered part of regular garbage.

Ms. Therrien asked if the fee gets applied to an individual's garbage bill. CFO Bell confirmed that it does. **Ms. Therrien** suggested that the cost of a small claims case would not be worth it for a \$400 fee. She acknowledged that one purpose of the fee is to deter future violations. She asked if there were more situations where disposed needles were a result of illegal drug usage versus medical uses. J. Cotter explained that would be difficult to determine without a full investigation.

Ms. Sprinkle shared that she occasionally comes across a syringe while out on a walk and that she recognizes now how serious it would be to place the item in a regular trash receptacle. J. Cotter concurred and stated that people can call the department to come and properly dispose of needles.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 5179, AS AMENDED, BY INCREASING THE FEE ASSOCIATED WITH CODE SEC. 66-42 FOR "IMPROPER CONTAINMENT OR DISPOSAL OF HOUSEHOLD MEDICAL WASTES [SHARPS] FROM \$250 TO \$400 AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5179, as Amended, by increasing the fee associated with Code Sec. 66-42 for "Improper containment or disposal of hazardous wastes" from \$50 to \$100.

J. Cotter explained that the City pays additional fees to the Borough to dispose of hazardous wastes. **Ms. Sprinkle** asked if there was a cost-free way for citizens to dispose of materials such as paint at the Borough landfill. J. Cotter confirmed that there is a designated area for individuals to do so.

Mr. Ringstad asked for more details on the difference between private citizens disposing of hazardous wastes versus the City doing so. J. Cotter explained that any individual can bring items

like batteries, paint, and other hazardous materials to be disposed of for free at the landfill, but if the City delivers the same materials, a fee is charged.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 5179, AS AMENDED, BY INCREASING THE FEE ASSOCIATED WITH CODE SEC. 66-42 FOR "IMPROPER CONTAINMENT OR DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS WASTES" FROM \$50 TO \$100 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Marney, Ringstad, Tidwell, Therrien, Sprinkle

NAYS: Cleworth

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5179, as Amended, by increasing the fee associated with Code Sec. 66-42 for "Improper containment or disposal of ashes" from \$50 to \$100.

J. Cotter shared that a few years back, workers unknowingly tossed a bag of trash that contained hot ashes into a garbage truck, which caused a fire in the compactor chamber. He reported that they had to empty the entire load of garbage into the street to prevent the truck from catching on fire.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 5179, AS AMENDED, BY INCREASING THE FEE ASSOCIATED WITH CODE SEC. 66-42 FOR "IMPROPER CONTAINMENT OR DISPOSAL OF ASHES" FROM \$50 TO \$100 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Therrien, Marney, Ringstad, Tidwell, Cleworth

NAYS: Sprinkle

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Ms. Tidwell referenced the "Public Works" section of the fee schedule and asked what situation would warrant those fees being charged. J. Cotter explained that when they have to dispatch crews to deal with abatements, snow removal, etc., that section sets the hourly staff rate that can be billed for workers' time as well as any equipment that is used.

Ms. Therrien asked for more information on the fees for a "Corrective Deed" in the fee schedule. She stated that her understanding is that filing fees are based on the number of pages and could vary from just a fraction of the amount listed in the chart to significantly more.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 5179, as Amended, by changing the "Corrective Deed" recording fee associated with Code Sec. 2-601 from \$125 to "Actual."

Ms. Therrien explained that normally the first page costs \$20, then \$5 for each additional page. She stated that she would prefer the fee to cover only what the City pays to file the document.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 5179, AS AMENDED, BY CHANGING THE “CORRECTIVE DEED” RECORDING FEE ASSOCIATED WITH CODE SEC. 2-601 FROM \$125 TO “ACTUAL” AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Ms. Therrien referenced the next fee in the schedule which pertains to charging an hourly rate for professional staff time associated with correcting a deed. She asked if it was appropriate to charge a fee for the work of correcting something that a past attorney had done improperly. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that there are many reasons why a deed may need corrected. CFO Bell added that the work to correct a deed may also involve work performed by Engineering Department personnel.

Clerk Snider noted that the fees associated with Sec. 70-161(f) and 70-162, which were the subject of Mr. Marney’s first two amendments, originally included the language “or actual cost, whichever is higher.” She asked if it was the intent to leave that language intact. **Mr. Marney** confirmed that his amendments were only to change the fees, leaving the referenced language in place.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5179, AS AMENDED, AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5179, as Amended, APPROVED.

- b) Resolution No. 5180 – A Resolution Authorizing Additional Matching Funds for the Cowles Street Reconstruction Project, Amendment No. 4. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- c) Resolution No. 5181 – A Resolution Approving Amendment No. 1 to the Maintenance Agreement with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities for the Landscaping Addition to the Cowles Street Reconstruction Project. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- d) Ordinance No. 6318 – An Ordinance Authorizing the Lease of Golden Heart Plaza to Festival Fairbanks. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- e) Ordinance No. 6319 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Section 2-119 Order of Business; Citizens Addressing City Council and Section 2-120 Rules of Procedure. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- f) Ordinance No. 6320 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Chapter 2, Article III Boards and Commissions, to Change the Composition of the Board of Plumber Examiners and to Remove the Requirement that the City Council Must Confirm the Election of the Chair. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- g) Ordinance No. 6321 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Chapter 2, Article V, Division 3 Budget by Enacting Section 2-659 Capital Projects Fund Preparation and Presentation to City Council and Requiring a Minimum Fund Balance for the City Capital Projects Fund. Introduced by Councilmember Cleworth.

Mr. Marney, seconded by **Mr. Ringstad**, moved to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6321.

Ms. Sprinkle expressed concern with the firm limits the ordinance would put in place and the inflexibility the Council would have should extenuating circumstances arise. She pointed out that the Council had passed a policy, via resolution, a year prior to establish a similar guideline.

Mr. Cleworth explained that resolutions are not codified and are often forgotten. He shared history about a past situation where a problem was resolved through a resolution only to have a future Mayor, several years later, enter into an agreement that was contrary to the parameters of the resolution, which had been long forgotten. He asserted that there have been other examples where City Councils are unaware resolutions and reiterated that codification is a stronger way to establish rules for the City to follow. **Mr. Cleworth** pointed out that the \$4MM minimum fund balance proposed was conservative, even lower than what the 2024 policy established. He noted that a minimum General Fund balance helps protect cashflow considerations, while a minimum for the Capital Fund would provide a safety net for emergencies, such as a natural disaster. He compared it to the similar approach with the annual \$200,000 emergency snow removal allocation.

Ms. Therrien suggested that Ms. Sprinkle's concerns may be resolved by the provision in the ordinance that any emergency spending that causes the fund to drop below the minimum balance would need to be replenished within 12 months.

Ms. Sprinkle asked about something else that was approved to state that funding for emergencies would be included in certain processes going forward. CFO Bell explained that a past discussion regarding the tax cap had resulted in a provision where money spent for declared emergencies can be included in the City's mill levy calculation. **Ms. Sprinkle** stated that she appreciates the intent of the ordinance but is still uncomfortable with the hard and fast number being set.

Mayor Pruhs discussed the strict parameters around the budgetary process and how the ordinance would strengthen the guidance and boundaries he adheres to as he prepares a budget for the Council each fall. He expressed support for the ordinance and for continuing efforts to be fiscally prudent.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADVANCE ORDINANCE NO. 6321 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Marney, Cleworth, Therrien, Ringstad, Tidwell

NAYS: Sprinkle

Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

- a) Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2025

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- b) Board of Plumber Examiners Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2025

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- c) Fairbanks Diversity Council Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2025

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- d) Clay Street Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes of June 4, 2025

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Sprinkle acknowledged the significant work that had gone into the fee schedule update. She recognized the need for citizens to be responsible and to follow City ordinances, particularly with matters such as snow removal. She pointed out that the rules are only as good as they are enforced.

Ms. Therrien shared that she, Ms. Sprinkle, Mr. Ringstad, and J. Cotter represented the City in a recent charity golf tournament, and they placed 13 out of 22 teams. She asked if anyone on the Council would attend the August Alaska Municipal League (AML) meetings. **Mayor Pruhs** stated he would not be going. **Ms. Therrien** asked if any budgeted funds remained for someone else to attend. **Mayor Pruhs** indicated that he would confer with the CFO to determine if it is feasible.

Mr. Cleworth briefly spoke about the history of natural resource extraction when Alaska became a state, the adjustment that occurred when the pipeline was approved, and the recent changes made by federal legislation. He stated that it could be a positive move for Alaska's financial situation.

Ms. Tidwell expressed appreciation for the approval of the paramedic recruitment bonus. She asserted that if it brought in just one already trained recruit it would be worth it, saving the City money that would have been spent to send them away for training. She discussed the Golden Days festivities taking place.

Mr. Marney shared that after Mr. Ringstad's recent incident, where he was attacked by a stranger on his own property, they were invited to the District Attorney's office to discuss the assault, his case, and how such incidents could be prevented in the future. He reported that no real conclusions came from the latter part of the conversation, other than it was clear that a senior citizen should not be brutally attacked. He encouraged everyone to think of remedies for the problem.

Mr. Ringstad discussed the challenge he faced during the attack, when he had the means to use lethal force to defend himself, knowing it would be justified, but ultimately choosing not to. He acknowledged that these types of problems impact the entire community and a fix will not happen by itself. He stated that everyone needs to work together to make the City safer and be willing to listen to suggestions.

Ms. Therrien stated that she had attended a Chamber of Commerce event earlier that afternoon and spoke with both the District Attorney and Attorney General about Mr. Ringstad's incident. She reported that the Council would be hearing from the District Attorney in the near future.

Mayor Pruhs asked for reports at the next meeting from J. Cotter regarding equipment and preparations for the upcoming snow removal season and from CFO Bell regarding the temporary labor budget. He shared about his plans to open the Polaris Building site during the Golden Days street fair for past and present members of the working group that had overseen the project over the years. He reported that for a donation to the food bank, members will be allowed to swing gold-painted sledgehammers against the final pieces of the demolished structure. He stated that would be a perfect opportunity to say goodbye to the building before the final stage of demolition.

Ms. Sprinkle recounted that there was discussion about holding an event to include Senator Lisa Murkowski, who had been integral in securing funding for the project. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that the demolition went too fast to align with the Senate's August recess. He assured the Council that an event honoring Senator Murkowski would still be planned for the future.

Ms. Therrien stated that she used to attend the Polaris Working Group meetings and that she would like to be invited again when they resume. **Mayor Pruhs** noted that they must use caution with how many Councilmembers attend to ensure compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

Ms. Sprinkle shared that another Downtown Market event was scheduled for Thursday.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk Snider reported that the candidate filing period for local elections would run from 8:00 a.m. July 15 through 5:00 p.m. July 29. She addressed Ms. Therrien's question about remaining funds in the Council's travel budget, noting that over \$2,700 of the allocated \$5,000 had already been spent. She stated it is unknown what other travel costs may be incurred, because it is dependent on the results of the October election and how many newly elected officials would need to attend the December AML conference.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Acting Deputy City Attorney Paul Ewers indicated that he had nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ringstad, 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 7:57 p.m.



DAVID PRUHS, MAYOR

ATTEST:



D. DANYIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: CC