



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, JANUARY 27, 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 5:30 p.m. Work Session for the Permanent Fund Review Board Annual Report, 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: Jerry Cleworth, Seat A
 Valerie Therrien, Seat B
 Sue Sprinkle, Seat C
 Crystal Tidwell, Seat D
 Lonny Marney, Seat E

Absent: John Ringstad, Seat F

Also Present: D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk
 Thomas Chard, City Attorney
 Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff
 Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
 Andrew Coccaro, Fire Chief
 Ron Dupee, Police Chief
 Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely)
 Jake Merritt, Human Resources Director (remotely)
 Robert Pristash, City Engineer
 Brynn Butler, Housing Coordinator
 Jarrod Zerbe, Code Compliance and Safety Specialist

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

FLAG SALUTATION

At the request of Mayor Pruhs, **Ms. Sprinkle** led the flag salutation.

CEREMONIAL MATTERS (Proclamations, Introductions, Recognitions, Awards)

Chief of Staff Michael Sanders introduced Skye Kaquatosh, a student from West Valley High School currently participating in an internship with the Mayor's Office.

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.]

Bobby Nikolaides, Chef & Owner of Bobby's Downtown – B. Nikolaides addressed problems he has experienced with incidents at the downtown post office and admitted that he does not know how to approach the situation, nor does he have any answers. He shared details of the constant presence of intoxicated individuals who loiter at the location, which is across the street from his restaurant. He described how the individuals frequently enter his business and create scenes, including assaulting staff, some of which are minors. B. Nikolaides reported that he has witnessed individuals dropping their pants to relieve themselves out in the open, on the public street, in the presence of his employees and younger patrons. He stated that it has been going on for years and recounted the story of a man setting himself on fire inside the post office some years ago. He explained that he called emergency services and ran across the street with a fire extinguisher. He noted that the individual died from his injuries, yet he was never contacted by anyone to discuss the incident, nor was his staff. B. Nikolaides asserted that the problems persist, that the list of events is endless, and that something has to be done. **Mayor Pruhs** invited B. Nikolaides to stay for Mayor's Comments, as he planned to speak about the post office issue at that time.

Mr. Marney asked if the situation seemed to be getting better or worse. B. Nikolaides declared that it is only getting worse. He gave the example of people asking to use the restroom in his restaurant, which he recognizes as a basic human need and always wants to allow, but they often do not come out for over half an hour, which requires that he or another employee check on the situation. He shared that on more than one occasion they have found individuals passed out in the restroom, sometimes even naked, and that it continues to create a terrible environment for his business. **Mr. Marney** acknowledged that B. Nikolaides does a lot for the community, including providing meals for those in need. B. Nikolaides insisted that he believes restaurants have a special opportunity to help and that he intends to continue to do so. He clarified that it is the same group of offenders who are making it a terrible situation for everyone else. He reiterated that the problems only seem to get worse.

Scott McCrea, President and CEO of Explore Fairbanks – S. McCrea extended an invitation for the Mayor and Councilmembers to attend Explore Fairbanks' Interior Tourism Conference. He discussed the lineup of speakers, topics, and events as well as a planned reveal for their new mascot. He committed to sending a detailed invitation via email and added that they are welcome to attend anything from a single presentation up to the entire conference.

Victor Buberger – V. Buberger pointed out that it had been a while since anything had been shared about the Polaris Building and asked for an update on the City's plans for the property. He alleged that the crane involved with the demolition had not adhered to OSHA standards the previous summer, and he expressed concern over the potential for injuries. He asked that the public be kept informed about the project.

Brynn Butler, Housing and Homeless Coordinator for the City of Fairbanks – B. Butler shared details about the upcoming Project Homeless Connect event that serves as a one-stop-shop to help connect individuals with services available in the community. She addressed the problems at the post office and offered to share her business card with any interested parties. She stated that if there is ever a situation that feels beyond someone's capacity to handle, they are welcome to call her and she will try and help. She added a disclaimer that she is not a police officer nor does she have any enforcement authority. B. Butler indicated that she is aware of a group of about 10 to 12 individuals who have been creating disturbances and that she is known among the unhoused community as someone who means business.

Mr. Cleworth asked what the hours of operation are for the new warming shelter. B. Butler shared that the facility is open from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. every day of the week.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if things had gone well since the shelter opened. B. Butler indicated that she is glad the facility is open and is well-attended by those who need it. She acknowledged that she had heard of a few difficult situations but that she is not privy to the details. She shared that she will be visiting the shelter in the near future and would report on what she learns.

Mr. Cleworth asked about the shelter's capacity. B. Butler replied that the capacity is 49 people.

Mayor Pruhs, hearing no requests for additional comments, declared Citizens' Comments closed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

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

Mr. Cleworth pulled the following items from the consent agenda:

- 12(f), Ordinance No. 6304
- 12(g), Ordinance No. 6305
- 12(h), Ordinance No. 6306

Mr. Marney pulled item 12(j), Ordinance No. 6308, 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 December 16, 2024

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of January 13, 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
3965	Republic National Distributing Company of Alaska	General Wholesale	K & L Beverage Company, LLC	945 Elizabeth Street
725	Midnite Mine	Beverage Dispensary	Midnight Mine, LLC	308 Wendell Avenue

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

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

Ms. Sprinkle asked for clarification on a notation within the application packet. Clerk Snider explained that recent rewrites of regulations of alcohol licensing have updated classifications for certain situations and that one of the businesses has a split, fixed counter setup, which is categorized differently than it was in the past. **Ms. Sprinkle** thanked her for the clarification. She noted the recent tragedy where an individual was shot outside of the Midnite Mine, which had nothing to do with their alcohol service or other business activity. She expressed hope that the incident would not impact the Council's decision.

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

YEAS: Marney, Cleworth, Sprinkle, Therrien, Tidwell
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Ringstad
Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

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

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
26251	GoodSinse, LLC	Retail Marijuana Store	GoodSinse, LLC	29 College Road, Suite 8C
20827	Good Titrations	Retail Marijuana Store	FSE, Inc.	506 Merhar Avenue
20829	Good Titrations	Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility	FSE, Inc.	506 Merhar Avenue
16091	Tanana Herb Company, LLC	Marijuana Concentrate Manufacturing Facility	Tanana Herb Company, LLC	1200 Well Street
14467	Tanana Herb Company, LLC	Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility	Tanana Herb Company, LLC	1200 Well Street
15814	Tanana Herb Company, LLC	Retail Marijuana Store	Tanana Herb Company, LLC	1200 Well Street
14874	GoodSinse, LLC	Marijuana Product Manufacturing Facility	GoodSinse, LLC	2604 Davis Road

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

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

Mr. Cleworth stated that he was aware of some complaints regarding odor from the manufacturing and cultivation facilities in the Well Street area. He asked if the concerns had been addressed with the business owners. **Mayor Pruhs** shared that he receives odor-related complaints for that side

of town about once every four to five months and that the business owners are proactive about resolving the issues. He explained that when he receives complaints of this type, he reaches out to request that they check their exhaust systems. He stated the community should not have to live with the smell and that the responsive actions from owners have been appreciated.

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

YEAS: Tidwell, Sprinkle, Marney, Therrien, Cleworth
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Ringstad
Mayor Pruhs declared the MOTION CARRIED.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT

Mayor Pruhs invited Joe Dallaire, the District Attorney (DA) in Fairbanks, to provide a report.

J. Dallaire recounted having attended a City Council meeting a few months prior when he gave an impromptu report on his office, which resulted in a request that he return periodically to provide updates. He discussed the large jurisdictional area that the Fairbanks DA's office covers, the various locations within the region, and the 33 total positions of his department. He reviewed the different units within the office and their areas of focus, along with statistics for the referrals received, cases covered, and trials undertaken in the previous year. J. Dallaire noted that they work with multiple law enforcement agencies but highlighted some of the key cases involving the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD). He stated he is aware of the issues in the downtown area, that he has been meeting with the Mayor and Chief of Police, and that he will be meeting with post office officials soon regarding the concerns he has been hearing about.

Mr. Cleworth asked J. Dallaire if his office deals with matters of guardianship. J. Dallaire explained that the DA's office strictly covers criminal prosecutions and that the only involvement it would have with matters of guardianship would be the beginning steps of a civil commitment for someone who had been deemed mentally incompetent and unable to stand trial. He indicated that the Attorney General's office would be the agency that handles guardianship cases.

Mayor Pruhs asked J. Dallaire if he could attend the meeting with post office officials that had been mentioned. J. Dallaire stated that the Mayor would be welcome to join them.

Mr. Marney thanked J. Dallaire for his local involvement and dedication to his position.

Ms. Therrien asked J. Dallaire if he has any coordination with Native organizations for criminal prosecution deferrals. J. Dallaire shared that his office maintains relationships with the various Native organizations but that the majority of their referrals are in coordination with the Fairbanks Community Restorative Justice Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, which is primarily for lower-level offenses. He noted that these individuals are often able to work with the program to seek resolutions and that most of the cases ultimately get dismissed.

Mayor Pruhs invited City Engineer Robert Pristash and Public Works Director Jeremiah Cotter to give an update on City streetlights and other items.

J. Cotter reported that an issue was discovered with an electrical box located on Eighth Avenue between Lacey and Noble Streets which had been causing outages for a large area. He shared that he had come into town on a Saturday to look for locations with issues, giving a heads up to the City's contractor that handles street lighting work. He reported that Star Electric had been responsive and was able to diagnose the issue and get the units working again. **Mayor Pruhs** asked for details on a permanent fix to the problem. R. Pristash explained that light sensors have been used for a long time to tell the streetlight units across the City when to turn on or off but that ten years prior they had opted to use a new, computerized system that would override the light cells and dictate operation schedules. He shared that the new system was supposed to save money but ultimately proved to be overcomplicated and the City chose to abandon it. He stated that despite disconnecting those components years ago, upon seeing photos referenced by J. Cotter he noticed a unit that was part of the old system. He explained that they discovered the unit had a battery which was somehow still holding a charge and interfering with the system in place. He indicated that an ideal solution would be to open the box, completely remove all remnants of the abandoned system, and install newer photocell sensors, which should fix the issues.

Ms. Sprinkle asked if this would also explain why the streetlights in her neighborhood never turn off. R. Pristash stated that the load centers across the City have switches that can be set to automatic or manual and that if they are having problems with sensors activating lights, they will usually switch the system to manual and let the lights burn constantly until they resolve the sensor issues.

Mr. Cleworth stated that he was under the impression that they were using an automated system that told the lights when to turn on and off based on the day of the year and available sunlight data. R. Pristash confirmed that was the system he had referenced, which never ended up working the way it was supposed to. He added that the problem they are finding is that remnants of the old system are interfering with what is in place now.

Mayor Pruhs thanked staff for their reports and expressed appreciation for Public Works taking care of street conditions over the weekend. J. Cotter added his gratitude for those employees who had been willing to come in on their days off to help take care of urgent needs.

Mayor Pruhs discussed the shooting that occurred outside the Midnight Mine and stated that he had been in communication with those involved late that night and into the next morning. He commended the FPD officers and the dispatchers who coordinated getting the suspect into custody. He shared that the owner of the bar reached out to him to ask if he would meet with the mother of the deceased, which he did. He indicated that while it was not easy, it was a good meeting. He shared that the mother requested to meet with and thank the City staff who were integral in seeing the suspect apprehended. **Mayor Pruhs** declared that in a time of tragedy, the best came out of in the worst of circumstances.

COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Therrien indicated that she would defer to the second round of Councilmember Comments.

Ms. Tidwell shared that she had attended the recent annual "Guns and Hoses" hockey game between local police and firefighters and that it was a great game.

Mr. Marney thanked J. Cotter for the efforts of Public Works. He thanked the Mayor for being involved with the recent murder incident. He commended the dispatcher who took action, using their available resources during a pivotal moment which ultimately led to FPD locating the suspect. He reported that he had reached out to Senator Dan Sullivan's office to discuss the problems with the downtown post office, as he understands it to be under federal jurisdiction. He asserted that FPD will always take care of the community but felt that others may need to be part of the solution.

Ms. Sprinkle expressed appreciation for the DA's office plan to meet with post office officials.

Mr. Cleworth thanked J. Cotter for his crew's work over the weekend and stated that he felt safe on the roads despite the conditions. He expressed appreciation for B. Nikolaides sharing his concerns and concurred that downtown business owners have unique challenges. He discussed people being trespassed multiple times, resulting in arrests, which does not seem to fix the problem as they are usually back on the street in 24 hours. He stated that is why he asked the DA about guardianship proceedings. **Mr. Cleworth** recounted that no concrete solutions have been found despite decades of the same issues and suggested that there needs to be a better legal hammer to address chronic public intoxication offenses. He added that there are also situations where people with mental illness create disturbances which affect businesses downtown; he added that those individuals can be more dangerous. He admitted that he does not have answers to these challenges but noted that they are all aware of the significance of the problem. **Mr. Cleworth** asked what tools could be available to business owners to deal with those types of situations other than the unproductive options currently being used. He wished the Mayor luck in seeking viable solutions. **Mayor Pruhs** indicated that he intends to be quite aggressive with how to handle these problems.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Ordinance No. 6303 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Chapter 26, Article III, Sections 26-94 and 26-95, Amending the Term of a Private Ambulance Service License and Renewal Procedures. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6303.

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

Mr. Cleworth asked for clarification on some of the updated language regarding the proration of fees for licenses issued midyear as well as the timing of renewals. City Attorney Thomas Chard explained that the purpose of the ordinance was to correct an oversight in conflicting parameters and language pertaining to the timing of license renewals. He clarified that only those obtaining a license for the first time would receive any proration of fees. He provided an example to illustrate how the process would work with the corrected language in the ordinance.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6303 AS FOLLOWS:

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

Mayor Pruhs declared MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6303 ADOPTED.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Resolution No. 5157 – A Resolution Awarding a Contract to NC Machinery Company to Provide a Motor Grader in the Amount of \$432,119. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- b) Resolution No. 5158 – A Resolution Awarding a Contract to RWC International Ltd to Provide an Asphalt Truck in the Amount of \$411,811. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- c) Resolution No. 5159 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Funds From the United States Department of Transportation for the FY2025 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program for Island Homes Subdivision Reconstruction. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- d) Resolution No. 5160 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Funds From FY2026 Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Appropriations for the Island Homes Subdivision Reconstruction. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- e) Resolution No. 5161 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Apply for Funds from the Alaska Division of Homeland Security for the FFY2025 State Homeland Security Program. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- f) Ordinance No. 6304 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Chapter 54 Procurement, Sections 54-39 and 54-241, to Clarify the Council Notification Requirement for Sole Source Purchasing. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

Mr. Cleworth, seconded by **Ms. Sprinkle**, moved to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6304.

Mr. Cleworth asked for clarification on whether Section 54-39(b) had been correctly notated. Clerk Snider explained that the language of the new Sec. 54-39(b) currently existed within the previous subsection and was being separated into a new subsection (b). She stated the subsections to follow were updated accordingly.

Mr. Cleworth asked if other parts of the Fairbanks General Code (FGC) place restrictions on the sale or disposal of certain surplus property, such as evidence from FPD or firearms, which would not be subject to the allowances for disposal provided to the Purchasing Agent. Attorney Chard

confirmed that a separate section of FGC addresses those types of situations, and he indicated that it may be prudent to include additional language referencing those items. **Mayor Pruhs** suggested that the issue be discussed at the next work session.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADVANCE ORDINANCE NO. 6304 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Tidwell, Cleworth, Marney, Sprinkle, Therrien
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Ringstad
Mayor Pruhs declared MOTION CARRIED.

- g) Ordinance No. 6305 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Section 70-162, to Ensure Visible and Safe Traffic Intersections and Amending the City Schedule of Fees and Charges for Services. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6305.

Mr. Cleworth pointed out that the heading for Sec. 70-162 only references regulations for “planting” but that some of the added language within the section addresses obstructions other than foliage. He suggested that if he was looking for information about fencing regulations, he would skip past that section once he read the title. **Mayor Pruhs** stated that he would work with the City Engineer and Attorney to resolve the issue and asked Mr. Cleworth to email him a list of things he had made note of within the ordinance. **Mr. Cleworth** shared an experience of an appeal process for a property owner off Cowles Street who was being directed to move an obstructing fence. He stated that the owner appealed the ruling due to the fence being in place since Alaska’s territorial days. **Mayor Pruhs** acknowledged that grandfathering exemptions is common. **Mr. Cleworth** explained that the City can get itself into trouble if there is not language to address what can be grandfathered, and he also mentioned Borough standards. He asserted that he would have a problem going after someone’s fence if it had been unchanged for decades. **Mayor Pruhs** concurred that those are important issues and committed to having more details by the next work session. He indicated that having a clear appeal process, plus checks and balances, is important anytime the City is dealing with private property.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADVANCE ORDINANCE NO. 6305 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Marney, Sprinkle, Therrien, Tidwell
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Ringstad
Mayor Pruhs declared MOTION CARRIED.

- h) Ordinance No. 6306 – An Ordinance Amending Fairbanks General Code Section 70-161 and the Local Amendments to the 2018 International Fire Code Adopted by Reference at Fairbanks General Code Section 30-32, and Amending the City Schedule of Fees and Charges for Services to Ensure Access to Fire Hydrants. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Mr. Cleworth**, moved to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6306.

Mr. Cleworth addressed the firm language of the newly added Sec. 70-161(e) which indicates that an individual would have only 24 hours to rectify the situation described therein. He suggested that that is a tight window for many people to correct matters of snow and ice placement and that there does not appear to be any discretion provided to the Director of Public Works. **Mayor Pruhs** agreed that there must be a standard but with reasonable flexibility.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADVANCE ORDINANCE NO. 6306 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Tidwell, Therrien, Sprinkle, Marney, Cleworth
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Ringstad
Mayor Pruhs declared MOTION CARRIED.

- i) Ordinance No. 6307 – An Ordinance Reestablishing the Incentive Bonus Program with the Fairbanks Police Department for Recruitment and Hiring. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

ADVANCED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA

- j) Ordinance No. 6308 – An Ordinance Reestablishing the Incentive Bonus Program with the Fairbanks Emergency Communications Center for Recruitment and Hiring. Introduced by Mayor Pruhs.

Ms. Sprinkle, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ADVANCE Ordinance No. 6308.

Mr. Marney expressed concern with the provision of the sign-on bonus being available to former staff members after only a 12-month absence from employment with the Fairbanks Emergency Communications Center (FECC). He added that the second half of the bonus being paid upon completion of a probationary period is much earlier than the similar incentive offered to police officers. He suggested that the bonus might not help with retention problems. Chief of Staff Michael Sanders highlighted language which stated that no individual could receive the bonus more than once – the same language that was in place when the program was installed. **Mr. Marney** indicated that he would like to see something to better address retention.

Ms. Tidwell noted that the attached agreement included a provision that the employee would stay for at least three years and that leaving prior to that would require a prorated payback of the bonus. **Mr. Marney** agreed that this was an adequate way to address the issue.

Mr. Cleworth concurred that the FPD incentive program differs from the FECC one in that police officers would receive their second half of the bonus after three years whereas dispatchers receive theirs after completing their probationary period, which is about nine months after hire. He recounted that the FPD program had initially included a longer threshold but eventually was settled on three years. He agreed that if they wanted to focus on retention, a longer stretch of time might be appropriate to receive the second half of the bonus.

M. Sanders pointed out that the FPD bonus was \$60,000 compared to \$15,000 for FECC. He suggested waiting three years for another \$30,000 makes more sense than doing so for \$7,500. **Mr. Marney** acknowledged that it would likely not be as effective and may even have a negative

effect. He noted that the existing program seems to be working, with six individuals being hired since implementation and with four of those remaining with the FECC. He pointed out that the FPD has seen about a 50% retention rate.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADVANCE ORDINANCE NO. 6308 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Sprinkle, Therrien, Cleworth, Marney, Tidwell
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Ringstad
Mayor Pruhs declared MOTION CARRIED.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

- a) Fairbanks Diversity Council Meeting Minutes of November 12, 2024

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- b) Discretionary Fund Committee Meeting Minutes of December 6, 2024

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- c) Memorandum Regarding Codification Error, FGC 70-42. - Sale or Disposal Form

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

- d) Memorandum Regarding City Clerk 2025 Travel Budget

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Therrien reported that the Legislative Committee recently met. She shared several items that had been discussed plus notes on the current legislative session in Juneau, including:

- The legislature is coming into an existing deficit of \$1.5 billion.
- It is unclear if the State can use the Constitutional Budget Reserve to address the deficit.
- The legislature is hoping for a supplemental appropriation for municipal assistance.
- Without a supplemental appropriation, the City of Fairbanks will likely receive around \$80,000 instead of \$400,000 to \$500,000.
- M. Sanders will be working on the City's capital requests to be addressed in March.
- An alternative categorization for the criminal charge of spitting on a public safety officer is being reviewed.
- Mayor Pruhs plans to travel to Juneau in February and April, and she plans to go in March.
- The Permanent Fund Dividend will likely be around \$1,000.
- A fairly flat budget, with a modest capital budget, is expected.

Ms. Therrien shared that she had emailed notes for her three days of attendance at the Alaska Municipal League (AML) conference in December. She added that she would like to focus on working with the various Native organizations in Fairbanks to coordinate mutual funding efforts to address problems within the community.

Mr. Cleworth discussed a recent letter that had been forwarded by the City Clerk from the Chena Riverfront Commission, which addressed the difficulty in coming to an agreement with the Alaska Railroad regarding the long-pursued bike path project. He shared that he had also received communication from the railroad to the Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST) Planning Policy Board, which he chairs. He explained that both the State of Alaska Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Alaska Railroad have different sets of requirements and regulations that appear to be in conflict for the proposed project. He stated that the Chena Riverfront Commission has essentially appealed to the leadership of both organizations to find a way to work through the issues for the benefit of the community. **Mayor Pruhs** shared that he has been involved with the project for about 30 years and that it is apparent that it will only be able to move forward with a land purchase. **Mr. Cleworth** acknowledged that the Alaska Railroad was given land such as this to allow it to have assets to ensure continued healthy operation and that if the organization were to consider selling that stretch of riverfront property, it would profit far more by selling it for residential property development. He pointed out that if the railroad was required to get an assessment of the property value based on what could be done with it, it is unlikely that the State would be able to afford the purchase, given the potential it has beyond a bike path.

Ms. Sprinkle reported that the Chena Riverfront Commission recently met and that the bike path had been a significant topic of discussion, as it has been since the late 1980s. She admitted that it is a messy issue and expressed hope that a solution can be found. She shared that the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors had also met, with the current focus being on the fly-in to Juneau to advocate for the issues of major concern to the Fairbanks community.

Mayor Pruhs addressed Mr. Ringstad's absence and shared that they had spoken on the phone regarding a current family obligation. He stated that he had excused Mr. Ringstad's absence.

Mr. Marney discussed the issues raised by B. Nikolaides about the downtown post office and encouraged him to take B. Butler up on her offer to assist the next time there is a situation. He spoke highly of B. Butler's efforts and success in helping with various difficult situations in the community. B. Nikolaides thanked him for the recommendation and committed to doing so.

Ms. Tidwell stated that she did not have any committee reports but shared that the Economic Development Commission would be meeting soon and would hear a presentation from the Fairbanks Economic Development Commission regarding their effort to become the Alaska Regional Development Organization for the region. She reported that she would also be traveling to Juneau in February and would be happy to meet with Ms. Therrien to discuss how she could further support efforts to promote the legislative priorities the Council had established for 2025.

Mayor Pruhs thanked Ms. Tidwell for her service on the Fairbanks North Star Borough Planning Commission. He stated that Olivia Rodriguez had been appointed to fill Ms. Tidwell's seat.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk Snider reported that registration for the upcoming Citizen Engagement Academy has been successful, that the 2025 class is full, and that people may still apply to be added to the waiting list. She indicated that the Mayor had made a request for the Council to consider moving the Regular Meeting of March 10, 2025 to March 17. **Mayor Pruhs** explained that he will be traveling to Washington, D.C. and that the week of March 10 was the most ideal time for the trip. He stated that if the date change was problematic for others, they could keep the original date and have Mr. Cleworth chair the meeting in his absence. Clerk Snider clarified that any change to the approved meeting schedule would need to be done by motion with a majority vote.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Chard indicated that he had nothing to report and thanked the Councilmembers for their service to the community.

Ms. Therrien asked if there was an update to the potential change of venue for an upcoming litigation. **Mayor Pruhs** responded that the issue was a confidential topic meant for Executive Session discussion only. Attorney Chard invited Ms. Therrien to reach out to him directly if she would like an update on the matter.

ADJOURNMENT

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

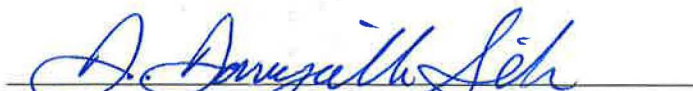
Mayor Pruhs called for objection and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

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



DAVID PRUHS, MAYOR

ATTEST:



D. DANYIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: CC