
City of Bethel, Alaska

Finance Committee Minutes

November 24, 2014

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on November 24, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

Meeting was called to order by Chair Carol Willard at 6:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

Comprising a quorum of the Committee, the following were present:

Albertson, Cochrane, Egoak, Shantz, Trantham, and Willard

Excused absences: Shear

Unexcused absences:

Also in attendance were the following:

Hansel Mathlaw, Finance Director
Tonya Hendrix, Assistant Finance Director (Fill in Recorder)
Patty Burley, City Attorney
Emily Russell, Alternate Committee Mbr.

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

There were no people to be heard.

MOTION: APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY:	Trantham	To approve the agenda for the meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Shantz	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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MOTION: APPROVAL OF MINUTES of October 13, 2014 Regular Meeting

MOVED BY:	Shantz	To approve the minutes with correction to reflect Jon Cochrane as unexcused absence.
SECONDED BY:	Trantham	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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NEW BUSINESS:

Item A. Water Assistance Program

Finance Director Hansel Mathlaw expresses that Council has requested he create a Water Assistance program and he presents a memo for a program he has created offering a twenty-five dollar credit for a six month period for those that apply and qualify and asks the Committee for their input in developing this plan further so that it can be presented to Council for approval.

Committee Members add discussion. Members asked Mr. Mathlaw how this program would affect the revenue of that the new rate increase was trying to raise and that it is a possibility that it will bring down revenue. Would layoff's to city employee's need to take place to offset the lost revenue? Wasn't the increase of rates to make the Utility system sustainable and how will offering discounts to these new rates affect that plan? Mr. Mathlaw suggests public donations as one option. Members ask about the sustainability of our Utilities and our ability to receive grants and other Government funds to improve our infrastructure. Numerous members stated they could not support any discounts to these rates without further information and data.

MOTION: To go into committee as a whole

MOVED BY:	Shantz	To go into committee as a whole to discuss an Water Assistance Program.
SECONDED BY:	Trantham	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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Payment plans were discussed as a form of assistance. The Assistant Finance Director Tonya Hendrix explains the current processes of offering payment plans. Discussion is made about payment plans being our form of water assistance verses a monetary discount. City Attorney Patty Burley states that our current BMC requires us to provide assistance of some sort and that it is the Finance Directors option to determine what that assistance will be and he is asking for this Committee to assist in that plan. Members agree to assist the Finance Director in his plan development. Discussion was made about maintaining the revenue to keep the utility program sustainable. Could tribal grants be used for this purpose? Mr. Mathlaw discusses several government programs that are out there. Members suggest that we research other outside resources to help customers with utility assistance and provide that list to customers as needed. Mrs. Hendrix discusses the current low amount of need being requested for utility services assistance and very few are bringing forward payments from any of these outside agencies. Members ask if the Tobacco Tax funds could be used for this program. Mr. Mathlaw states that the funds have already been appropriated and this will not solve our sustainability. Members suggest waiting 6 months to see what the delinquency rate will actually be before they move forward with a plan. Mrs. Hendrix suggests a written policy be made on our current practice of payment plans.

MOTION: To come out of committee as a whole

MOVED BY:	Trantham	To come out of committee as a whole.
SECONDED BY:	Shantz	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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MOTION: That the Finance Director will produce a written policy of existing payment plan practices that will be produced to the City Manager for review and implementation.

MOVED BY:	Cochrane	That the Finance Director will produce a written policy of existing payment plan practices that will be produced to the City Manager for review and implementation.
SECONDED BY:	Albertson	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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OLD BUSINESS:

Item A. Sales Tax Re-Write-Finance Director

Discussion about the Sales Tax re-write. City Attorney expresses her need to get this to Council and that she would like this committee to finalize their decisions at this meeting. Members speak to the format of this revision not being in the form they are used to seeing and not receiving changes for review. Brief discussions of last meetings findings, changes and Members move forward to motions for corrections.

MOTION: "J" pg 9

MOVED BY:	Cochrane	Corrections to be made to J.
SECONDED BY:	Shantz	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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MOTION: "AA" pg 11

MOVED BY:	Cochrane	Corrections to be made to AA
SECONDED BY:	Russell	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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MOTION: "Lien Language" pg 29

MOVED BY:	Cochrane	Corrections to be made to lien language. Reflecting, wait to post until lein filed.
SECONDED BY:	Shantz	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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MOTION: This Sales Tax Code be give to Council for approval.

MOVED BY:	Cochrane	This Sales Tax Code be give to Council for approval.
SECONDED BY:	Russell	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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MOTION: No Meeting in December

MOVED BY:	Cochrane	No Meeting in December due to holidays.
SECONDED BY:	Shantz	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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COMMENTS

FINANCE DIRECTOR COMMENTS- Discusses current need for Water assistance program and requests ideas for this plan.

COUNCIL REP- Leif Albertson- Happy Holidays.

MEMBER SHANTZ- Happy Thanksgiving.

MEMBER TRANTHAM- Thanks everyone for being here tonight and Happy New Year to everyone.

MEMBER COCHRANE- Happy Holidays.

MEMBER EGOAK- Sorry for missing the last couple of months and is glad to be back. Happy Thanksgiving.

ALTERNATE MEMBER RUSSELL- Thanks everyone

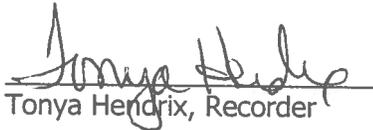
CHAIR WILLARD- Thank you for being here. Happy Holidays.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY:	Shantz	
SECONDED BY:	Trantham	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote.
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APPROVED THIS 26 DAY OF Jan, 2015.


Tonya Hendrix, Recorder

Carol Ann Willard, Chair