

CITY COUNCIL

Tad Miller
Dario Notti
Mike O'Brien
Agnes Phillips
Ruth Richardson, Mayor
Stanley Rodgers
Thor Williams



CITY MANAGER

Ken Weaver

CITY CLERK

L.J. Tanner

**City of Bethel
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
October 22, 1996**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was convened at 6:33 p.m. by Mayor Richardson in the Log Cabin, Bethel, Alaska.

II. VOICE

Present: Miller, Notti, O'Brien, Richardson, Rodgers, Williams
Absent: Phillips (excused)

III. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

Mary Wilda Warner, Bethel, encouraged the Council to pursue a bike/pedestrian trail. She also suggested that the Council begin thinking of using volunteer labor next Spring to beautify the city by planting grass seed and cleaning up litter. Council Member Miller requested that this issue be placed on the agenda for the first regular meeting in February, 1997. Mayor Richardson added that she would like a beautification effort to coincide with the City's 40th municipal anniversary. City Planner John Malone stated that the comprehensive plan update will include bike and pedestrian trails; and he will attend a conference in Fairbanks on how to plan for those types of trails.

Antone Anvil, Bethel, also encouraged the Council to follow up on bike and pedestrian trails. Council Miller suggested that if a community recreation center bond is approved by the voters, some of those funds could be used for trails. Mr. Anvil also addressed the recent death at a local motel, and urged the Council and City Police to do whatever they can to alleviate the inebriate problem.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

motion M/M by Miller, 2nd by O'Brien to approve the minutes of the October 8, 1996, regular meeting as presented.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously, Williams abstaining.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Richardson requested the following addition under Executive Session: City of Bethel vs. Andrew Scheall dba Western Alaska Maintenance.

motion M/M by O'Brien, 2nd by Rodgers to approve the agenda as amended.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

VI. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mary Wilda Warner from Public Health Nursing to gave a brief presentation on Child Health Month, and then Mayor Richardson read a proclamation declaring October as Child Health Month.

A letter in the packet regarding the Alaska Coastal Policy Council was discussed. The City Clerk was requested to gather more information, and pass that information along to each Council member before the next council meeting.

Mayor Richardson pointed out the letter from local schoolchildren regarding the boardwalks around Pinky's Park, and noted Public Works Director Harry Parsi's response memo.

Mayor Richardson announced that Finance Director Bonnie Duke was Acting City Manager in Mr. Weaver's absence, and would be presenting the Manager's Report.

VII. MANAGER'S REPORT

Acting City Manager Duke referred Council to the written reports, and discussed the following:

- **DCRA Population Estimate:** City Planner John Malone was on hand to discuss a potential challenge to DCRA's population estimate of 5,106. Mr. Malone reviewed the methods used by DCRA, and recommended that the City not challenge their determination due to the costs involved. Acting City Manager Duke noted that population is not the main factor used in DCRA's calculation of revenue sharing, so the City might not gain anything if they challenged DCRA's estimate. In fact, the City could spend more challenging the determination than we would gain in revenue sharing.
- **Seawall Costs:** Ms. Duke advised the Council that \$488,000 is required to finish the seawall project. Land exchanges can be used for some of that amount, but cash will be required for approximately \$388,000. As of June 1996, the Port had a fund balance of \$280,000.
- **BUC Purchase:** Ms. Duke presented a list of consideration items for a potential purchase of the utility. Council Member O'Brien noted that good information was also contained in the denial order of AVEC's attempted purchase. He believes the asking price is far more than the utility is worth. Council Member Miller requested a list of pros and cons, explaining why a municipality should even consider purchasing an electric utility. Mayor Richardson requested that the list of pros and cons take money issues into consideration. Ms. Richardson also asked for an estimate of the cost to have a professional consultant analyze the potential purchase.

Mayor Richardson requested that the staff-level committee which is reviewing the use tax on alcohol, give a presentation at the next Public Safety Commission meeting.

VIII. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES and COMMISSIONS

Mayor Richardson noted that she had received two applications for the vacancy on the Public Works Committee, and appointed Mr. Wally Wallace to the position.

motion M/M by Miller, 2nd by Notti to ratify the appointment of Wally Wallace to the Public Works Committee.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance Committee: Acting City Manager Duke notified the council that the next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 24.

Port Commission: Council Member Rodgers stated that there was no Port Commission meeting this month, due to the Port Director being out of town. The next meeting is on November 18.

Public Works Committee: Council Member O'Brien reported that the Committee did not have a quorum at their last meeting. They will meet again on November 19, and elect a new chairperson.

Public Safety Commission: Mayor Richardson reported that she attended part of the Commission's last meeting. The vehicle for hire ordinance was not discussed.

Transportation Commission: Council Member Williams reported the next regular meeting is November 7, and a special work session for the river taxi ordinance will be held on October 23. Jim Bock's seat has been declared vacant.

Youth Services Committee: Council Member Miller reported that the Committee is still investigating whether to become a Commission which encompasses both youth and senior activities. Their next meeting is on October 29.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

Item A: Bonds for a Community Recreation Center

Council Member Miller, who requested the agenda item, explained that he is still collecting information. He has contacted the Alaska Municipal Bond Bank Authority, and found that a second-class city can finance bonds with a sales tax increase. Council Member O'Brien suggested that private businesses be involved in the planning process up front, and that venture capital is available to help fund a community shopping center. Council Member Notti noted that there are plans to upgrade the Jr. High School gym, and perhaps the city could coordinate a recreation center with that project. Mayor Richardson added that ONC has had plans to expand around the bowling alley. The bowling alley is surrounded by city land, so it would be a good place for a recreation center. The Council referred the issue to the Finance Committee, and it will be placed on their November agenda. Tad and Agnes will be in town to attend.

Item B: City Municipal Classification Status

Council Member Miller, who requested the agenda item, provided further information. He has contacted the office of the Lt. Governor, and is expecting a report from DCRA. He has also had conversations with the City Attorney about the matter. He explained that the issue is not just monetary - there is the question of why a community the size of Bethel is still a second-class city. Mayor Richardson suggested that the prospect of a property tax is scary for many property owners in town. Mr. Miller will report back to the council when he has additional information.

Item C: Road Use Fees & Heavy Equipment Tax

Council Member Miller, who requested the agenda item, explained the intent behind a road use fee and/or heavy equipment tax. He stated that heavy equipment operators need to drive more slowly, and that they cause a great deal of the damage to the roads. Therefore, they should be charged a use fee for using the roads. Mayor Richardson suggested that this fee could be charged through the vehicle registration process. Council Member Rodgers stated that drivers should be given some kind of a warning to slow down and

minimize impact on the roads before being slapped with a new fee. The matter was referred to the Public Works Committee for a recommendation.

X. NEW BUSINESS

Item A: PERS Retirement Incentive Program

Council Member O'Brien, who requested the agenda item, stated that the City has five employees who are eligible for the retirement program. So far, only Police Officer Chris Liu has expressed interest. He would like to refer the matter to the Finance Committee. Acting City Manager Duke noted that the City has received information on the Program, and will report back to Council after the information has been reviewed and a cost analysis performed.

Item B: Priority List for City Lobbyist

Council Member O'Brien, who requested the agenda item, stated that the Governor will be putting a budget together very soon, and it is important the City Lobbyist be informed as to the City's priorities. The Council agreed that a meeting with the Council, Chamber of Commerce, and Long-term Strategic Planning Task Force should be held to discuss city priorities. A directive was given for the City Manager to schedule this meeting to be held as soon as possible, but after the November 5 election.

Item C: Resolution #96-37, Accepting State Grant for Coastal Management Planning

motion M/M by Miller, 2nd by Rodgers to adopt Resolution #96-37.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried, unanimous.

XI. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Miller - Challenged all Council members to make a \$20.00 donation to KYUK radio. Mayor Richardson wrote a check immediately.

Notti - Volunteered to help work on city boardwalks. Noted that the KYUK fund-raiser is for a very worthwhile cause.

O'Brien - Stated that he would meet the \$20.00 challenge and raise it to \$30.00. Mentioned the Healthy Families Alaska program, which recently received a grant and is moving forward. Thanks to Sharon Trish for her efforts to obtain the grant and program.

Phillips - Absent, no comment.

Richardson - Stated that adult villagers who travel to Bethel are responsible for their own safety.

Rodgers - Expressed appreciation to both Harry Faulkner and Antone Anvil. The City needs more recreation opportunities, including bike trails.

Williams - Noted that the new Council seems to be working well together. Is sorry that he is not present for this meeting; will be in town for the meeting on November 12.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

motion M/M by Rodgers, 2nd by Miller to adjourn the regular meeting and enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the City of Bethel vs. Andy Scheall dba Western Alaska Maintenance, at 8:55 p.m.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

motion M/M by Miller, 2nd by Rodgers to come out of Executive Session at 9:30 p.m.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

motion M/M by Miller, 2nd by O'Brien to dismiss the City's lawsuit against Andy Scheall.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

motion M/M by Rodgers, 2nd by Miller to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

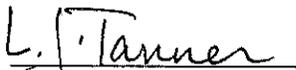
vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 12TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1996.



Tad Miller, Acting Mayor

ATTEST:



L.J. Tanner, City Clerk