

City of Bethel, Alaska

City Council Minutes

August 28, 2001

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Bethel City Council was held on August 28, 2001, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council chambers, Bethel, Alaska.

Mayor Rodgers called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Jerry Drake	Stanley "Tundy" Rodgers
Agnes Phillips	Dario Notti
Karol Sanchez-Pobrislo	Carl Berger
Thor Williams	

Also in attendance were the following:

Robert Herron, City Manager
Colleen Soberay, City Clerk

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

Yolonda Jorgensen, manager and part owner of Northern Lights restaurant, spoke to council about Ordinance #01-17 that prohibits businesses from offering plastic shopping bags. She explained she had begun circulating a petition to place the issue on the October 2 ballot to allow the public to decide if plastic bags should be illegal. She said she already had more than half of the required signatures. She then read a list of rebuttals as determined by the petition sponsors. Ms. Jorgensen reiterated the reasons she is against Ordinance #01-17 and reiterated the storage difference and cost difference. Ms. Jorgensen said the extra cost would eventually be passed on to customers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY:	Phillips	To approve the minutes of the August 14, 2001 regular meeting
SECONDED BY:	Williams	

**Corrections noted by the city clerk*

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY:	Drake	To approve the regular agenda and consent agenda after adding an executive session to discuss a financial and legal matter
SECONDED BY:	Notti	

Consent agenda: Resolution #01-26

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor's Report included the following:

- Governor's Talking Points for the week of August 17 and 20, 2001
- Letter from Office of the Governor-Re: Recommendation to the Alaska Coastal Policy Council
- Letter from DCED-Re: FY03 State revenue sharing/safe communities program population determination

MOVED BY:	Williams	To amend the agenda by adding new business discussion item E: FY03 State revenue sharing population determination
SECONDED BY:	Notti	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT

City Manager Herron, noted the management reports included in Council packets and reviewed the following items with Council:

- Yuut Elitnaurviat ad hoc committee to define potential 10 acres for the facility, as directed by Council. Meeting will start August 30 at 1 p.m.
- Delta Discovery Commentary-Provided a copy of unedited commentary in regard to the August 22 issue of the Delta Discovery

Council member Phillips said she disagreed with the way the first paragraph of the city manager's commentary was written.

Council member Berger commented on Chief Petitt's department report and asked Manager Herron to explain why three people are scheduled to attend a grant writing conference in D.C., especially since the City is hosting a grant-writing course in November.

Manager Herron said it's a two-fold plan in that the group would attend a criminal justice grant-writing workshop and afterward lobby on the City's behalf. He said it would be invaluable for the city clerk to receive specialized grant writing experience, as well as the Chief's assistant. Manager Herron said he approved the Chief's attendance because he has recently been there and would prove helpful and because it is important the City send a good group to lobby the delegation. Manager Herron said it's important to put the City's best foot forward and the group would use the special grant-writing workshop in concert with what they already know.

Council member Berger requested that the group prepare a report for Council in regard to the trip. He said he is concerned that the police department is able to fulfill their responsibility in the community. Council member Berger said with the Chief out of town as much as he's been out of town this year, he has concerns that the department will be unable to fulfill its responsibilities. He reiterated he would like to know what the outcome and results are from the trip and would like a report.

City manager Herron said Council member Berger's request for a report is duly noted. H also responded in part response to Council member Berger's concerns regarding the results of such a trip by referring to the trip Janelle Vanasse took to D.C. for Yuut Elitnaurviat funding that resulted in more that a million dollars. City manager Herron said Ms. Vanasse met with all of the people that this group is going to meet with in October. He said yes, it is an investment and said with the outstanding qualities of all three people going, they are going to D.C. as a team to represent the City Council. Discussion briefly ensued.

Council member Drake said he agrees this is a valid trip and said it's valid to send three very professional people to D.C. to represent the City for law enforcement specific training and lobbying.

Council member Pobrislo asked who is funding the grant and who is being lobbied. City manager Herron responded that the city clerk, Chief and his assistant have instructions to network with people that they will need to impress in written form when the grant proposals are presented. He said the city lobbyist would arrange for meetings with the staff of every member of our delegation and the state lobbyists.

Council member Pobrislo said she has no objection of three people going because we need people to go with different experiences which will help in securing funds. Council member Williams said he only sees win-win for the City and the Chief's role is more of an administrative role than a supervisor role. Discussion briefly ensued.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Senior Advisory Board

Council member Berger said the SAB has not met for several reasons, but will re-schedule. Council member Berger reported the Senior Center Director has been successful in a recent grant effort.

Parks and Recreation Committee

Council member Pobrislo said the Committee met August 22 and reviewed the items discussed such as the Dust Buster information provided at a previous council meeting and the potential of a riverfront park. She said the committee would put Dust Busters on its next meeting's agenda, scheduled for September 19.

Planning Commission

Council member Notti said the commission is schedule to meet September 20.

Port Commission

Mayor Rodgers said the commission met August 20. Mayor Rodgers said tariffs and security issues were discussed and other items were postponed to the next regular meeting, September 17.

Public Works Committee

Council member Drake said the committee met August 21. He said CH2M Hill gave an up-date on the current feasibility study o the landfill, and the committee met with Stephan Koruba, VISTA volunteer, who gave a report on what he has been doing with the Recycling Center. Council member Drake said Mr. Koruba is an excellent young man and has already done a lot with the recycling center. He's done an extensive amount of research on recycling paper and cardboard and is helping with the feasibility study as it relates to recycling. Council member Drake said the committee has requested that Mr. Koruba become a regular part of the meeting as an ex officio officer.

Council member Pobrisio asked Council member Drake if he would add an agenda item of lowering the speed limit during certain months to help with dust control. Council member Drake said the Dust Buster recommendations should be forwarded to all committees/commissions and that he would bring those recommendations to the committee for input. Mayor Rodgers said a couple of years ago Council asked Administration to implement a lower speed limit to 20 mph for heavy equipment for vehicles such as water and sewer trucks. City manager Herron said the Mayor's comments would be forwarded to Public Works the next day and stressed that this is the wish of the Council. Discussion briefly ensued.

Public Safety and Transportation Commission

Council member Williams said the commission met August 13 and referred to the minutes in the council packet. He said that next meeting is September 10 and two special meetings are scheduled for September 17 and 20 in regard to recent taxi cab industry subpoenas.

Finance Committee

Council member Phillips said the committee met August 23 and reviewed the agenda items discussed, She said the next meeting would be in October. Council member Phillips said she is disappointed the Finance Director is resigning.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Item A — Discussion — Possible purchase of Post Office Annex

City manager Herron explained the procedure to purchase the property such as a deposit of about \$10,000 just to inspect the property. He said the price is \$690,000 and said the USPS said this is not negotiable and that USPS will not release the appraised value. Manager Herron further explained this is a policy decision and the question is does the Council want to purchase the property and how would the City pay for this purchase of about \$700,000. Manager Herron also explained that a package would have to put together and presented to the voters.

Council member Drake said he doesn't like the idea of putting down a deposit just to inspect the property. He also said the City would have to make compromises because the City wouldn't be starting from scratch. Council member Drake also pointed out the issues and costs associated with renovations of a building. Council member Williams said the Annex is located too far out of the center of town for the purposes of a police station. Discussion ensued.

MOVED BY:	Drake	To stop any further discussions of pursuing the purchase of the Post Office Annex, unless some drastic change in the situation has occurred that the city manager is aware of and brings to council's attention
SECONDED BY:	Notti	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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MOVED BY:	Notti	To suspend the rules and allow another opportunity for people to be heard with a time limit of 5 minutes each
SECONDED BY:	Berger	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by voice vote 5-1 (Drake) (Phillips not present for vote)
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Hugh Short, Sr., representing Alaska Cab, said the new chauffer test is discriminating against people who can't read and write and it will affect a lot of families. Mr. Short also said, his company, Alaska Cab will not turn over its private books and the company is appealing to the Supreme Court.

Diana Chung, Quyana Cab, said her drivers can speak English but cannot read English. She said a few of her drivers failed the chauffer test and had to leave Bethel because they could not pass the test. She said Council should require the City to teach a class covering test questions and other taxi industry issues. Another taxicab industry representative reiterated what Ms. Chung said to Council.

NEW BUSINESS

Item A — Introduction — Ordinance #01-32: An ordinance authorizing the disposal of a portion of Tract 1A Remainder, USS 3790 to David McCarr

MOVED BY:	Drake	To introduce Ordinance #01-32 and set the public hearing for the Sept. 25, 2001 regular meeting
SECONDED BY:	Notti	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote
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Item B — Introduction — Ordinance #01-33: Budget Modification

MOVED BY:	Williams	To introduce Ordinance #01-33 and set the public hearing for the Sept. 25, 2001 regular meeting
SECONDED BY:	Berger	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote
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Item C — Resolution #01-26: Supporting and committing to the Empowerment Zone efforts for the region

Resolution #01-26 passed under the consent agenda.

Item D — Resolution #01-27: A resolution outlining concerns and intent of the City of Bethel in regard to the August 23, 2001 BIA site fire

City manager Herron said his first thoughts were to ask the Fire Chief to turn off the water hoses, but that's not how firefighters think. Manager Herron said one advantage to the fire is that it gave the City firefighters valuable training. He explained there are many negatives to this occurrence. He said the Fire Chief met with officials from Juneau and said the officials recognized they have a lot of liability issues at the BIA site. City manager Herron reviewed the resolution and recommended its passage.

MOVED BY:	Drake	To adopt Resolution #01-27
SECONDED BY:	Williams	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Item E — Letter from DCED — Re: FY03 State revenue sharing/safe communities program population determination

City manger Herron said in 1990 the official population was 5,220 and said now it's 5,471. He said it is a policy decision in that does Council want to spend money to conduct a population study to drive the population number up, which probably is higher than 5,471. He also explained there was a report in the media that Alaska was undercounted in several communities.

Council discussed the ramifications or benefits to having a higher population in how it relates to state revenue sharing and other funding such as federal dollars. Council also raised concerns about populations in regard to allowing for subsistence hunting and fishing. Discussion ensued.

MOVED BY:	Drake	To direct Administration to research the ramifications of higher population and issues involved with conducting a population study and report back to Council
SECONDED BY:	Notti	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by voice vote 6-1 (Phillips)
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COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Council Member Berger wished everyone well on their moose hunting and berry picking. He said he did get a response from the AC store manager in regard to price comparisons of Bethel and other villages in the region. He said the response did not give a particular reason, but suggested price depends on the product and how it is sold in a particular community. Council member Berger encouraged everyone that as they shop in the stores to compare prices because the stores should be under some pressures to price their items competitively. He said he'd continue to monitor prices.

Council Member Pobrislo wished everyone a happy Labor Day and wished Rhys Tony a happy belated birthday.

Council Member Drake said wished everyone a happy and safe Labor Day Weekend.

Council Member Rodgers wished Betty Pete a happy Birthday. He asked everyone to travel safe over the Labor Day weekend and wear PFD on the river.

Council Member Notti wished Betty Pete a happy birthday and congratulates to YKHC on the opening of the Inhalant Center. He also wished the best for Mildred Samuelson. Mr. Notti wished everyone a happy Labor Day weekend and happy moose hunting.

Council Member Williams said there are a lot of people in the community this week because of the inhalant abuse conference and opening of the YKHC Inhalant Center. He also asked Council member Berger if he had received a response in regard to food costs in Bethel and surrounding villages.

Council Member Phillips wished her mother a happy birthday and wished everyone good luck with moose hunting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOVED BY:	Drake	To go into executive session to discuss a financial and legal matter
SECONDED BY:	Pobrislo	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Council came out of executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

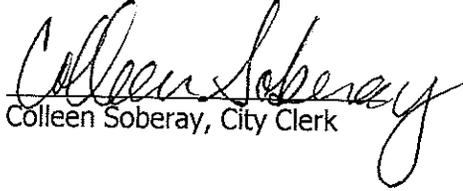
MOVED BY:	Phillips	To adjourn the meeting.
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SECONDED BY:	Pobrisio	
VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.	

With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

APPROVED THIS 25th DAY OF AUGUST 2001.

ATTEST:


Colleen Soberay, City Clerk


Stanley "Tundy" Rodgers, Mayor