
City of Bethel, Alaska

City Council Minutes

December 15, 1998

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Bethel City Council was held on December 15, 1998, at 6:30 p.m. in the Log Cabin, Bethel, Alaska. Mayor Agnes Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

ROLL CALL

There were present:

Mayor Agnes Phillips	Mike O'Brien
Antone Anvil	Karol Pobrislo
Dario Notti	

comprising a quorum of the Council.

Absent:

Joerene Hout (Excused)	Stanley "Tundy" Rodgers (Unexcused)
------------------------	-------------------------------------

Also in attendance were:

Bob Herron, City Manager
Gaye Vaughan, City Clerk

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

No one stepped forward to speak to the Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

City Clerk Vaughan noted that due to a computer problem she was unable to have the minutes of the last meeting. She said they would be included on the next agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Notti requested Resolution #98-33 be removed from the consent agenda.

Council Member Pobrislo requested that the curfew for Homecoming be added to New Business.

Council Member O'Brien requested that political signs be added to New Business.

MOVED BY:	O'Brien	To approve the agenda as amended.
SECONDED BY:	Notti	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion to approve agenda carried by unanimous consent.
-----------------------	--

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Phillips announced the following:

- She thanked the City Manager for a very nice Christmas Party the previous Sunday.
- She had attended a Leadership Institute.
- The Mayor had also attended an open house for the Lulu Heron Aggregate Housing. The facility has a smoke house, steam room, arts and crafts room and is handicap accessible.
- Mayor Phillips had traveled to Washington, DC, to attend a 0-3 conference. The case studies used at the conference will help her in her job, her family and as Mayor.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Herron noted that department head reports were included in the council packets.

He noted that the Ridgecrest Cemetery is now fenced and the gate is locked. He noted that several city employees will have keys in order to assist people in entering the cemetery.

Mr. Herron noted that the old fire hall has been demolished and the lot is clean.

The City Manager stated the final project design for new bullrail and fendering system are complete for the city dock and will go to bid in January with cement slated for April and fendering immediately following. The dock will be ready for barge business next summer.

Council Member Notti asked which design was chosen, to which Mr. Herron replied that he had a packet and could show it to anyone interested.

City Manager Herron stated the City employees and families celebrated Christmas holiday with a party the previous Sunday. He noted the highlights were dinner, Santa presenting gifts to the children and live entertainment. The Mayor and council members Notti, Anvil, and Pobrislo also joined the employees.

Mr. Herron advised the Council that the Court had granted a temporary restraining order to the cab drivers arrested for bootlegging and the city has been ordered to return their permits. On advice of counsel, he will not oppose the preliminary injunction as it is unlikely the city would get a favorable decision.

He stated that the bid for ice road maintenance will go out this month.

The City Manager stated he met with the Senior Citizen Advisory Board about the senior citizen sales tax exemption. He recommended that a special subcommittee be formed consisting of himself, council members and possibly others appointed by council. This subcommittee will meet with the SCAB's new subcommittee comprised of Billy McCann, Gladys Jung, Dave Trantham and Esther Green to develop a possible amendment to the recently adopted sales tax ordinance.

Mr. Herron noted that the Governor's budget includes \$250,000 for the courthouse project, \$3,000,000 for water-wastewater upgrades; \$715,000 for boardwalk; \$112,740 for the Braund Bldg. renovation and approximately \$5,000,000 for the Bethel airport.

Council Member Pobrislo stated she met with the seniors and that they realize they should pay part of their way but don't want to lose the exemption entirely. She added that their subcommittee is working very hard on a possible amendment.

Council Member Anvil stated he was glad the cemetery fencing project was completed. He was not happy about the sales tax ordinance being adopted when he was not in attendance. He would like the ordinance to be reconsidered before the April 1 enactment date. He said that many seniors cannot attend a meeting due to lack of transportation or being home bound.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Public Works Committee

Council Member O'Brien stated the Committee met and discussed lack of members and lack of issues being sent to them from the Council. They did an overview of the summer projects and roads.

Public Safety Commission

Council Member O'Brien stated the Commission met on December 7. He noted that draft minutes were in the packet. He announced that there is a good chance that ABC will make deliver sites mandatory for "damp" communities. The Commission did approve a mission statement and will spend the next 3-4 meetings continuing their review of the ordinance. There were a lot of prohibitive things in the draft ordinance and he wanted the public to know that this ordinance is not meant to punish people but to control the flow of alcohol. The Commission also discussed snowmachines, the new helmet law and various blind corners in town.

Port Commission

Council Member Rodgers was not present to give a report.

Senior Citizens' Advisory Board

Council Member Anvil stated he had not attended the last meeting and that the City Manager had given a report. The next SCAB meeting will be January 6 at 10:30 a.m.

Finance Committee

Mayor Phillips stated that the Finance Committee had not met since the last Council meeting.

Planning Commission

Council Member Notti stated the Planning Commission will meet on Thursday.

Parks & Recreation Committee

Council Member Pobrislo stated the Committee had met the previous evening and she had been unable to attend. The main agenda item was the cost of booth rental for the July 4th celebration. The Committee will meet next on January 19 at 6 p.m. at the Youth Center.

Clerk's note: Mayor Phillips passed the gavel to Vice Mayor O'Brien and left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Herron stated that the Governor really enjoyed the celebration this past summer. He added that games of skill and chance used to be very popular and booths of that sort should have free rental. He'd like to see a more carnival atmosphere.

Council Member Notti said the price of the booths has gone up due to the cost of cleaning up the silly string, food wrappers, etc, that is littered after the celebration. He thought an option was to prohibit certain items from being sold or charging people for littering.

Transportation Commission

As Council Member Hout was not present, no report was given.

NEW BUSINESS

***Resolution #98-33: Declaring Yupik as the First Language of the City of Bethel
(Council Member Notti)***

Council Member Notti stated the title of the resolution was not quite what he had meant in the resolution.

A discussion ensued with the Be It Further being changed to delete "other than Yupik"; the second Whereas was changed to read "the majority of the population"; and, the title was changed to *A Resolution Authorizing the Use and Translation of Yupik in Testimony at City Meetings.*

MOVED BY:	Notti	To adopt Resolution #98-33 as amended.
SECONDED BY:	Pobrislo	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
-----------------------	---

Clerk's note: Mayor Phillips returned to the meeting and the gavel was returned to her.

OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance #98-27: Repealing, Revising And Readopting The Sales Tax Code; Modifying Exemptions And The Collection And Enforcement Procedures; Clarifying Appeal Procedures; Providing Incentives For Prompt Reporting And Payment Of Sales Taxes Collected; And Making Other Changes (Adopted November 17, 1998)

City Manager Herron asked that he be a part of the sub-committee to work on an amendment to this ordinance.

Mayor Phillips asked if there were others interested in being on the subcommittee. Council members O'Brien and Anvil asked to be included.

Council Member Anvil reiterated that he would like to have the council rescind the ordinance and hold another public hearing.

MOVED BY:	Anvil	To rescind Ordinance #98-27.
SECONDED BY:		

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion failed due to lack of a second.
-----------------------	--

Council Member Notti stated he would support an exemption for senior citizens.

City Manager Herron reviewed the general funds revenue analysis with the council. This review was a snapshot to show how the city is doing financially. He said he and the finance dept would begin work on the mid-year budget modifications in January.

Mr. Herron announced that the senior subcommittee would next meet on December 28 at 12:30 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Council Member Pobrislo stated she had enjoyed meeting with the seniors even though it was on a controversial issue. She knew they could come up with something to make this work for everyone's advantage. She again announced that Homecoming would be held on January 23 with a 50's theme and the community is invited.

Council Member Notti sent regards to the families who have lost loved ones since the last meeting.

Mayor Phillips expressed a Merry Christmas to everyone. She noted that she had slipped out to attend the elementary school's Yupik immersion program and had enjoyed seeing her daughter sing in Yupik. She also noted that she had voted in favor of the ordinance which eliminated the senior tax exemption due to increasing expenses and declining revenues. She noted the harsh conditions of living in Bethel.

Council Member Anvil stated he was sorry his motion failed. He hoped something would happen for the seniors before the April 1 date. He thanked Bob Herron for his work and for taking action when requested. He added that he had received an invitation to the Governor's inauguration which came too late for him to attend.

Council Member O'Brien wished everyone good holidays. He noted that there are still many caribou up the river.

Mayor Phillips thanked the City Manager for a very good party and for the recognition of outstanding employees.

Council Member Pobrislo stated she had spoken with many employees at the party who had a lot of good comments about the job Mr. Herron is doing.

The Council recessed for a break prior to an Executive Session at 7:50 p.m.

MOVED BY:	O'Brien	To go into Executive Session to perform an evaluation of the City Clerk
SECONDED BY:	Pobrislo	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
-----------------------	---

The Council meeting was reconvened at 8:21 p.m.

MOVED BY:	Notti	To give the City Clerk a satisfactory evaluation and increase her salary by 5% effective December 8.
SECONDED BY:	O'Brien	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
-----------------------	---

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Agnes L. Phillips, City Mayor

ATTEST:

Gaye J. Vaughan, City Clerk