
City of Bethel, Alaska

City Council Minutes

October 10, 2000

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Bethel City Council was held on October 10, 2000, at 6:35 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Bethel, Alaska.

Mayor O'Brien called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Mayor O'Brien	Karol Sanchez-Pobrislo
Jerry Drake	Agnes Phillips
Tundy Rodgers	Dario Notti—arrived at 7:00 p.m.

Also in attendance were the following:

Bob Herron, City Manager
Colleen Soberay, City Clerk
Louann Cutler, City Attorney
Carl Berger, Newly-elected Council Member

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item A — Certification of the Regular City Election held October 3, 2000

MOVED BY:	Drake	To adopt Resolution #00-27: Certifying the Regular City Election
SECONDED BY:	Pobrislo	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Item B — Oaths of newly elected City Council Members

City clerk administered oaths of office to Jerry Drake and Carl Berger.

Item C — Election of new Mayor and Vice Mayor

Mayor O'Brien opened nominations for election of 2000-01 Mayor.

Council Member Phillips nominated Council Member Rodgers for Mayor. Council Member Drake nominated Mayor O'Brien.

MOVED BY:	Phillips	To close nominations for Mayor.
SECONDED BY:	Pobrislo	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Council voted by ballot. Council Member Rodgers was elected as Mayor.

Mayor Rodgers opened nominations for election of 2000-01 Vice Mayor.

Council Member Phillips nominated Council Member Pobrislo for Vice Mayor. Council Member O'Brien nominated Council Member Drake.

MOVED BY:	Phillips	To close nominations for Vice Mayor.
SECONDED BY:	Berger	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Council voted by ballot. Council Member Pobrislo was elected as Vice Mayor.

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

Janelle Vanasse, Education Specialist for LKSD, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center. Ms. Vanasse explained that the Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center would provide education and vocational training for teens and young adults, meeting career preparations and employment training needs of our region. Although Ms. Vanasse said there is much yet to be done at a planning level, she explained the collaboration and cooperation needed to pool resources and facilitate linkages for successful development and operation of Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center. She also explained the enrollment target groups and projections, program components, and facility development. Ms. Vanasse explained the impact this program would have on the region.

Manager Herron reminded council of Gov. Knowles comments, during a recent visit to Bethel, about wanting a regional vocational school in Bethel. Manager Herron said it's for the region, but Bethel was very important to this school. At the 2000 education summit the Governor announced he wanted to build a regional vocational education boarding school in Bethel, costing \$32 million.

He also said Bethel is not listed as a partner in this project. But if Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center is built in Bethel, it will impact on the city significantly, both positively and, possibly, negatively. Manager Herron supported the idea that the City become involved and be a partner. He suggested adding a discussion

item to the agenda regarding the City becoming a partner in the Yuut Elitnaurviat/ People's Learning Center project. Mayor Rodgers addressed his concerns about the sustainability of Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center, but agreed council should discuss this project.

After questions and answers (funding, land, student eligibility and sustainability) with Ms. Vanasse and Cliff Andrews, council agreed to add this issue to the agenda.

MOVED BY:	Phillips	To make Bethel a partner in the Yuut Elitnaurviat/ People's Learning Center project.
SECONDED BY:	Notti	

Manager Herron suggested Council hold this motion until this is discussed as an agenda item because administration would like to make a presentation later during the discussion on Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center.

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion withdrawn.
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Virginia Turner, resident of Bethel, explained how snow piling by her house last year has impacted her property. She said the snow was pushed into a lot next to her property. As a result, she said she is surrounded by water and that the back of her sand pad is a marsh. Ms. Turner requested the City find another spot to pile snow.

Council directed Manager Herron to study this and remedy the snow piling procedure in this area, if necessary.

Willy Keppel, Planning Commission member, addressed high fuel prices in Bethel. Mr. Keppel explained the current cost of heating fuel and the price hike that will take place soon. He explained that, along with the fuel price increases, the city's 5 percent tax is weighing heavily on the community. On behalf of the residents of Bethel, Mr. Keppel requested council suspend sales tax on heating fuel until June 1, 2001.

Council Member O'Brien reviewed fuel price increases, both wholesale and retail, since May of 2000. He said fuel price hikes should be researched. He asked why fuel prices are higher in Bethel than anywhere else and how these price hikes are justified.

Manager Herron said Mr. Keppel has raised good points, but suggested that it could be argued that the concept of suspending sales tax on heating fuel is a romantic one. The City would realize these costs. He suggested council take this issue through a slow process, but consider ramifications of suspending the tax.

Council agreed the fuel prices were high and that research should be done as to why. Council directed administration to write a letter to the fuel companies inquiring about the fuel prices. After a brief discussion, Mayor Rodgers asked, with concurrence of council, that this issue be looked into and put on the next council meeting's agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY:	Notti	To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Sept. 26, 2000 with changes noted below.
SECONDED BY:	O'Brien	

Changes to minutes: Jane Conard, acting chair for the Family Clinic Board of Directors, name corrected. Correction in Public Works committee report. Correction in manager's report.

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

MOVED BY:	Drake	To approve the agenda with the addition of <i>unfinished business</i> item D: Parks & Recreation ice-skating areas in Bethel; <i>new business</i> item F: Certificates of Appreciation; item G: Yuut Elitnaurviat/ People's Learning Center; item H: New vehicle purchase; item I: Fuel prices
SECONDED BY:	Phillips	

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

Mayor Rodgers announced the following:

- Governor's Talking Points for the weeks of September 25 and October 2, 2000
- Governor's Talking Points—Special Edition October 1, 2000
- Letter and information in regard to World Population Week 2000: Saving Women's Lives; and a request for proclamation
- Mail delivery via Hovercraft—Final director-level consistency finding
- Letter from Representative Mary Kapsner—*Re:* Alaska history taught in Alaska schools
- Letter from Coalition for the Alaskan Way of Life—*Re:* Nov. 7 ballot measure #1: Wildlife management issue; and a request for resolution of support
- Letter from U.S. Dept. of Commerce—*Re:* Status report of the '98 Fisheries Disaster Program of the Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- Letter from Ted Stevens—*Re:* Response to Council Member Phillip's letter in support of funding for state domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions
- Letter from AK Dept. of Community and Economic Development—*Re:* FY01 state revenue sharing payment

Council Member O'Brien commented on the letter from Representative Mary Kapsner in regard to Alaska history taught in Alaska schools. Council Member O'Brien gave a brief background on Alaska history taught in schools. He asked Council to support this effort with a resolution. Additionally, Council Member O'Brien commented on the letter from Coalition for the Alaskan Way of Life in regard to the November 7 ballot measure #1:

Wildlife management issue. He explained this ballot measure and that he supports this ballot measure.

Council briefly discussed Alaska history taught in schools. Council Member Notti said his concern is that this class wouldn't start soon enough and asked Manager Herron to respond to Mary Kapsner's letter in regard to his concern.

MOVED BY:	O'Brien	That City draft a resolution in support of Alaska history taught in Alaska schools and in support of Ballot Measure #1
SECONDED BY:	Notti	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Council Member Phillips thanked Senator Ted Stevens for responding to her letter in support of funding for state domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions.

MANAGER'S REPORT

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

- Municipal Employee of the Year—As directed, the City of Bethel has nominated Howard Elliott, Port Director
- Seawall Repair Appropriation—President Clinton did veto the appropriation bill that included these dollars
- Planning/Platting/Construction Code Revision Update—City Attorney, Louann Cutler, gave a report on the status of this Code update. Ms. Cutler briefly noted the three broad parts of the Code that will be changed—straightening out inconsistencies, strengthening enforcing regulations and meshing comprehensive plan with land use plan. Ms. Cutler also briefly reviewed the process.
- Urban Rural Unity Study Panel—Manager Herron has been asked to sit as one of three panelists at the October 18 Commonwealth North Forum in Anchorage. Tim Towarak, President of Bering Straits Native Corp; Rita Stevens, President of Kodiak Area Native Association; and Manager Herron will give their perspectives on the study and the urban-rural gap and possible individual recommendations. At this forum, the responses from legislative candidates on a questionnaire from Commonwealth North on the Urban Rural Unity Study will be released.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Senior Advisory Committee

Council Member Hout was not present. Manager Herron said Louise Charles, Senior Services Director, reported to him that everything was going well and thanked everyone for recent food donations. He said the Senior Advisory meeting is scheduled for October 11 and the nominating committee is scheduled to nominate some elders for upcoming election.

Planning Commission

Council Member Notti said the commission has not met since the last council meeting, but will meet October 19. He briefly reviewed the city planner's report.

Port Commission

Council Member Rodgers said the commission has not met since the last council meeting, but the next meeting is scheduled for October 16. Mayor Rodgers noted the September 18 minutes and the port director's report in the council packet.

Public Works Committee

Council Member Drake said the Public Works committee has not met since the last Council meeting, but will meet October 17. He said the Task Force has not met, but will have material to present to council at the next council meeting to review the work the Task Forces has been doing.

Public Safety and Transportation Commission

Council Member O'Brien reported the commission met on October 2. He said the Transportation Inspector reported that the new DMV clerk was doing well and the DMV has grossed \$92,000 since February. He also said comments were made by commissioners concerning unsecured loads hauled around town. Council Member O'Brien asked everyone to be cautious. He also said a special meeting was held October 9 to discuss the legal ramifications of Mr. Miller's case. The special meeting was scheduled to reconvene October 16, as Brian Kay requested additional time. The next regular meeting is scheduled for November 6.

Finance Committee

Council Member Phillips said the committee will meet October 12. She said at 6:30 p.m. October 12 there will be a sales tax and business license general information session. The finance committee will meet after this session.

Parks and Recreation Committee

Council Member Pobrislo said the committee has not met since the last council meeting and that the next meeting is scheduled for October 18.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Item A — Discussion Item: Support for Retirement of Four Lower Snake River Dams

Council Member Drake said Bethel has no business considering this issue, that this concerns a Washington D.C. based environmental firm and WA fisheries. Council Member Notti disagreed and said we are involved, as did Council Member O'Brien. Council discussed supporting the retirement of the dams and agreed to indirectly support this, in that they would support Alaska fishermen supporting this issue.

Mayor Rodgers asked if council would agree to move **new business item G**, Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center, up on the agenda because people in the audience were waiting to discuss this issue.

MOVED BY:	Drake	To suspend the rules and allow discussion item G to take place at this point in the meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Pobrislo	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Manager Herron reviewed a package of information put together by John Malone, City Planner, on a site for the Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center. He said the City should become a full partner in the discussion stage. He said the City is in a good position, working with the Planning Commission and the community, to offer viable options of where the Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center could be located. Manager Herron reviewed a city map and highlighted the areas of a possible location of Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center. He said, after a public process, maybe the City could become involved in this by contributing land. Manager Herron reviewed other land concerns. He suggested the City begin the process of getting involved by directing administration and a council member to be actively involved in the planning of Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center. Manager Herron reiterated that the contribution the City could make is offering land.

Council discussed the concerns raised earlier in the meeting during Janelle Vanasse's presentation. Manager Herron addressed location and infrastructure concerns and the importance of the City being involved so the City does have a say in where Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center will be located.

Council agreed it is very important to be involved in this planning process. Council Member Pobrislo and Council Member O'Brien volunteered to start attending the planning meetings. Manager Herron reviewed the meeting schedule.

Council agreed to support the concept and planning of Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center. Council directed that a resolution be presented at the next council meeting.

Cliff Andrews, educational specialist for vocational education, commented that the strategy behind this is to keep going with the planning of Yuut Elitnaurviat/People's Learning Center regardless of support at this time.

Bob Meddinger, Superintendent of BABS, said the economic impact, positively, is going to be enormous. He also said BABS itself with just its own payroll, now with five certified and five classified, to say nothing of dorm parents and services to the dorm, just a micro system of what the big school would be, it's brought in literally millions of dollars to the city. He also said the cost is going to be beneficial to the City, other than the obvious benefits of our young people.

Bill Ferguson, Superintendent of LKSD, thanked council and city manager for the opportunity to present this project and invited council to attend Yuut Elitnaurviat/ People's Learning Center planning meetings.

Item B — Discussion Item: Participation and Support of Resource Development Council (RDC)

Council Member Drake said he is in support of participation of RDC. He also briefly explained RDC. Council Member O'Brien and Mayor Rodgers said they, too, support participation of RDC.

Council Member Notti said he has a couple of conflicts. He said he didn't think some members of RDC have supported issues in this region and his other concern is the cost to join.

Council Member Drake suggested council direct administration to research the cost of joining RDC and benefits of joining RDC. Council agreed.

Item C — Discussion Item: Support for Americans Digital Bridge

Manager Herron said staff recommends forwarding this to IT personnel, John Malone and Nicole Dahl, asking them to research this and, if necessary, draft a resolution to be brought back to council to consider. Council agreed and directed this information be forwarded to IT.

Item D — Discussion Item: Ice-skating areas in Bethel

Manager Herron said administration supports the efforts to maintain ice-skating rinks. He said both Public Works and Parks and Recreation will work together on maintaining ice-skating rinks this winter.

NEW BUSINESS

Item C — Discussion Item: Concession area in Courthouse

Manager Herron reviewed a memorandum from Andrew Steele, Bethel DMV Supervisor, in regard to moving the DMV office to the concession area in the courthouse. Manager Herron asked council for direction. Council and Manager Herron discussed the pros, cons and feasibility of moving the DMV from the State Troopers building to the Bethel courthouse. Council agreed to move the DMV and directed administration to do so.

Item D — Appoint council member to AML Board of Directors

Council Member O'Brien requested that he remain on the AML Board of Directors. Council agreed he should remain on the Board.

Item E — Appoint council members to committees and commissions

Council Members agreed to stay on the same committee or commission with the exception of Council Member Berger, who would be the new council representative for the Senior Advisory Committee. Council Member Berger asked if he would need to resign from the Public Safety and Transportation Commission, as he is a citizen member. After a brief discussion, council agreed there should only be one council member on a committee or commission.

Item F — Discussion Item: Certificates of Appreciation

Mayor Rodgers read the letter's of appreciation for Howard Elliott, Port Director; Joanne Walsh, Administrative Assistant to the Port Director; and Joerene Hout, for serving on the City Council.

Item G — Discussion Item: People's Learning Center

Moved up on agenda.

Item H — Discussion Item: New vehicle purchase

Manager Herron said, after a bidding process, one bid was submitted by Wilson Ford in Seattle for a new truck—2000 Ford Excursion at \$37,800. Manager Herron recommended council honor this award for a new vehicle, as the money has been in the budget for the last two years to buy a new vehicle. He said the new vehicle would go to the Port Department and recommended the old Port vehicle go to the City Manager. Council briefly discussed and agreed with Manager Herron.

MOVED BY:	Notti	That the city purchase the new vehicle and that it go to the Port Department and the old vehicle to the city manager.
SECONDED BY:	Phillips	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Item I — Discussion Item: Fuel prices

Council Member O'Brien reiterated his earlier comments about the fuel prices. He said he would like to hear from Wave Fuel, Nicholson's and Omni Corporation about how they justify these prices. Council Member Drake said there is no competition here, so the prices will naturally be higher. He also mentioned price fixing and that it be studied.

Manager Herron suggested that council direct city attorney to be the author of the letter to these companies to address council's concerns.

City attorney said, at council's direction, the city is negotiating with Bethel Fuels on the through-put fee agreement, which may give the city some leverage. She said she would

work with the city manager to get more information for council. Council Member Drake suggested the City hold off on the provision of them being the sole users of the petrol port until other options have been explored.

Council Member Phillips asked the mayor to direct city finance to study the budget in how it relates to the fuel tax and the impact of suspending the fuel tax.

Council further discussed the fuel price issue. Council directed administration to research the fuel prices and directed city finance to study the budget as Council Member Phillips suggested.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Council Member Berger said it was nice to be back on council and he looks forward to working with the council. He also congratulated Mayor Rodgers, Vice Mayor Pobrislo and Council Member Drake.

Council Member Pobrislo congratulated Council Member Berger and Drake and Mayor Rodgers. She also congratulated Katie Baldwin as the new state cross-country champion and congratulated the cross-country team for their performance at the state cross-country championships. Wished her brother a happy birthday. Thanked Council Member Notti and O'Brien for serving as vice mayor and mayor.

Council member Notti gave his condolences to the Petersons. He thanked Myron Naneng for his hard work as president of AVCP and congratulated Arthur Lake, new president of AVCP. He wished his daughter a happy birthday.

Council Member O'Brien congratulated Mayor Rodgers. He said it was an honor to serve as mayor for this past year. He thanked everyone for their support.

Council Member Drake congratulated Mayor Rodgers. He said he hopes his mother-in-law gets well soon.

Council Member Rodgers said he is glad that Council Member Phillips' father is alright. He gave condolences to the family of [REDACTED] and to the family of Kenny Dahl. He asked that everyone be very careful of the ice and the partly frozen lakes. He said it's starting to freeze and the lakes are not ready to be tested. He also thanked council for their confidence in him to serve as mayor.

Council Member Phillips gave her condolences to the Petersons. She also invited everyone to participate in the TWC Peace Walk that will take place October 18. She thanked Council Member Notti for serving as vice mayor and Council Member O'Brien for serving as mayor. Council Member Phillips congratulated the new mayor and vice mayor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no business to be discussed in executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

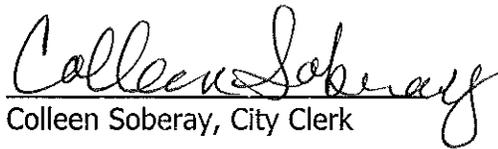
MOVED BY:	Notti	To adjourn the meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Drake	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

APPROVED THIS 24th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2000.

ATTEST:


Colleen Soberay, City Clerk


Stanley "Tandy" Rodgers, Mayor