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
December 10, 1996

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was convened at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Richardson in the Log Cabin, Bethel, Alaska.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Miller, Notti, O'Brien, Phillips, Richardson, Rodgers, Williams
Absent: none

III. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

David Glander, Bethel, questioned some of the current problems in the Vehicle-for-Hire industry. He stated that taxi-cab drivers should be notified when changes to the City code will affect them.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

motion M/M by Miller, 2nd by O'Brien to approve the minutes of the November 26, 1996, regular meeting as presented.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Member Miller asked to remove New Business Item C, Discussion-Ballot question seeking mandate for cab regulation/de-regulation.

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

Mayor Richardson read a Proclamation recognizing December as National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month. She urged people not to drink and drive, especially during the upcoming holidays.

Ms. Richardson noted that she would again be honored to participate in the Lion's Club annual tree-lighting ceremony. The ceremony is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on December 18, at the Cultural Center.

Next, Mayor Richardson read a letter from John Charlie of the Toksook Bay Traditional Council, regarding alcohol and drug abuse at hotels in Bethel. She thanked Mr. Charlie for sharing his concerns.

Regarding committees and commissions, Mayor Richardson requested that Council Members report any recommendations from their respective committee or commission to the City Clerk. In addition, Council Members should report and advocate for their committee or commission's recommendation at the next Council meeting.

When a committee or commission wants to make changes to the Bethel Municipal Code, they should outline the proposed changes and state the reasons for the changes. The outline of proposed changes should be brought to Council for consideration during the Reports of Standing Committees section of the agenda. If the Council concurs, the outline then will go to the City Manager, who will work with the City Attorney to draft an ordinance for introduction. The City Manager will speak with the Chairperson of the appropriate committee or commission if he has any questions. The Mayor requested that Council Members minimize working directly with the City Attorney on an individual basis. Instead, the City Manager should be the point person to work with the Attorney.

VII. MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Weaver referred Council to his written reports, and discussed the following:

- Ice Road Maintenance Bids: Mr. Weaver stated that the closing date for bids was December 16, 1996. Because the Council potentially would not meet again until 1997, Mr. Weaver requested that Council authorize him in advance, to award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder.

motion M/M by Rodgers, 2nd by Phillips to authorize the City Manager to award the Ice Road Maintenance Contract to the lowest responsible bidder, per the conditions stated in the City Manager's memo dated December 5, 1996.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

- Change of Use for Pit Park: Swimming has been removed as one of the designated uses of the park, with approval from the Bureau of Land Management. Mayor Richardson proposed that a contest be held to give the park an official name. Council Member Miller suggested that the contest be held for students at Kilbuck and M.E. schools. The City Clerk was requested to follow-up on the proposal.
- Gaming Permits: Permit applications for the K300 Race Committee and Video World were included for the Council's information. Council Member Notti noted that of the four beneficiaries of the Video World Gaming Permit, only one is based in Bethel.
- Kickoff of Comprehensive Plan Update - A public meeting will be held at the Lion's Club at 7:00 p.m. on December 11, 1996, to initiate the update of the City's comprehensive plan. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Council Member O'Brien asked the City Manager for an update on the "Drug and Alcohol Free School Zone" and "Drug and Alcohol Free Recreation Zone" signs that are to be posted. Mr. Weaver stated that he would check into the matter and have an update by the next Council meeting.

VIII. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES and COMMISSIONS

Finance Committee: Council Member Phillips reported that the Committee has recommended the installation of meters on City water trucks. In addition, they are beginning to look into the costs of regulating the vehicle for hire industry, and preparing for the 6-month budget review session. Council Member Miller asked if they had considered a Hotel/Motel bed tax, per Dave Trantham's suggestion to the Council. Council Member Phillips said she would bring it up at the next meeting, on January 16, 1997.

Planning Commission: Council Member Notti stated that the Commission will discuss a land donation to the K300 at their next regular meeting, December 12. Council Member Miller inquired about the park at

AVCP Housing. Mr. Miller noted that he had asked the Commission to consider upgrades to this park over a year ago, and that it has never been discussed. Council Member Notti stated that he would bring the matter up at the next meeting.

Port Commission: Council Member Rodgers reported that all of the Commission's recommendations to the Council have been acted on. Their next meeting is on December 16, 1996, 7:30 p.m. at the City Dock.

Public Works Committee: Council Member O'Brien stated that the Committee will meet again on December 17, at 7:30 p.m. at the City Shop. The item "Landfill Hours" can be removed from the table of recommendations, it has been closed out. Council Member Miller asked Mr. O'Brien about the road use fee suggestion? Mr. O'Brien stated that it is handled administratively, by the State. He will investigate into how a fee might be assessed on heavy equipment, which is not registered. The Committee will also look into the installation of meters on City water trucks.

Public Safety Commission: Mayor Richardson reported that she was unable to attend the last meeting. However, she does have some concerns to share with the Commission, and will bring them up at the January meeting.

Senior Advisory Board: Mayor Richardson noted that she was unable to attend the last meeting of the board. Ms. Richardson noted that the Senior Center will have Christmas open-house luncheons on December 16 and December 18. The December 18 lunch will be hosted by the Korean Community.

Transportation Commission: Council Member Williams stated that the Committee has been holding work sessions to discuss the problems with the vehicle for hire industry. Their next regular meeting is on January 2, 1997, 7:00 p.m. at the City Offices Conference Room. Commissioner Doreen O'Brien added that the Commission has had excellent attendance at the work sessions.

Youth Services Committee: Council Member Miller reported that he attended the Youth Services Committee meeting held today. The Committee is still discussing the formation of a Commission, and what they might regulate or preside over as a Commission. Their next meeting is on January 14, 1997. They will discuss the purchase of playground equipment at that meeting.

Mayor Richardson called a 10 minute break.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

Item A: Recreation Center Municipal Bonds
Council Member Miller, who requested the agenda item, called everyone's attention to the information included in the packet. He stated that it would be difficult for the City to obtain municipal bonds because of our Second Class City status. Mayor Richardson agreed that the City needs a another facility for public gatherings and conferences, something larger than the Cultural Center, Armory, or BHRS. Mr. Miller stated that he would bring the issue of revenue bonds up at the next Finance Committee meeting.

X. NEW BUSINESS

Item A: Introduction of Ordinance #96-47, River Taxi-cab Regulations

motion M/M by Williams, 2nd by Miller to introduce Ordinance #96-47.

Discussion followed. Council Member Miller noted that plain language should be used to convey to taxi drivers exactly what will result from the ordinance, if it is adopted. He also questioned why river taxi drivers should pay more for a permit than regular taxi drivers. Council Member Williams stated that all interested parties, including cab drivers, were invited to the public meetings where the ordinance was drafted. Robert Himschoot, Chairman of the Transportation Commission, stated that a higher permit fee should be charged to river taxi drivers because they charge higher fares. Without any solid way of tracking their sales, the Commission has to estimate what the fee should be, and $125 is their best estimate. Council Member Notti questioned why river taxis will not be allowed to provide service between points in Bethel. He added that he agreed that the safety regulations in the ordinance are important, but that he would vote against the ordinance when it comes up for adoption.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried, unanimously.

Item B: Introduction of Ordinance #96-48, Vehicles for Hire

There were many people in attendance who had signed up to speak on the ordinance. Therefore, Mayor Richardson held an informal public hearing, before allowing a motion to introduce the ordinance. The following people asked questions and expressed their opinions on the proposed ordinance:

David Glander	Daniel Wilcox	Jesse Kim
Terryl Miller	Young Lee	Tania Oh

motion M/M by O'Brien, 2nd by Williams, to introduce Ordinance #96-48.

The City Clerk was asked to read an opinion from Lee Sharp, which stated that Taxi Permits are associated with the vehicle listed on the permit, not with the Dispatch Company listed on the permit. A thorough discussion followed, with opinions expressed both in favor, and in opposition to, the proposed ordinance. Some discussion centered on whether the City should regulate the industry at all. Council Member Notti suggested an amendment, that would allow taxi permits to be transferable upon the death of the permittee.

vote Roll call vote. Motion carried, 5-Yes, 2-No (Miller, Notti)

Item C: Resolution #96-49, Supporting the Bethel Regional Social Services Planning Committee's State Funding Priorities

Mayor Richardson read the Resolution.

motion M/M by Miller, 2nd by Rodgers to adopt Resolution #96-49.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

XI. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Miller - Expressed sympathy for the recent deaths in the City. Encouraged people to decorate their homes with lights this holiday season.

Notti - Gave condolences to the families of Brent Watson and John George Peter. Wished everyone Happy Holidays.

O'Brien - Appreciated the turnout of interested citizens and taxi drivers. Wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Phillips - Wished everyone a safe, sober, and happy Christmas. Reminded any children listening to be good for the next few weeks!

Richardson - Stated that she is impressed by the number of work sessions held by the Transportation Commission. Also appreciates the hard work put in by all Council Members and feels fortunate to serve on the Council.

Rodgers - Stated that he would like to see the taxi issues resolved.

Williams - Expressed sympathy to the families who have lost loved ones during the holiday season.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

motion M/M by Miller, 2nd by Notti to adjourn the regular meeting and enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Rodgers vs. City of Bethel claim, at 9:17 p.m. It was requested that the City Clerk remain for the Executive Session discussion. *Mayor Richardson and Council Member Rodgers left the council chambers at this time.*

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

motion M/M by Miller, 2nd by Williams to come out of Executive Session at 10:07 p.m.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

motion M/M by O'Brien, 2nd by Phillips to adjourn the meeting at 10:07 p.m.

vote Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 14TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1997.

Ruth M. Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:

L.J. Tanner, City Clerk