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# City of Bethel, Alaska

## City Council Minutes

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March 12, 2002

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

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### CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Bethel City Council was held on March 12, 2002, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council chambers, Bethel, Alaska.

Vice Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

### ROLL CALL

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

Jerry Drake	Vice Mayor Dario Notti—Acting Mayor
Carl Berger	Hugh Short, Jr.— <i>via teleconference</i>

Also in attendance were the following:

George Young, Acting City Manager  
Colleen Soberay, City Clerk

### PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

**Karol Pobrislo**, started out by thanking everyone. She explained living in the Bethel community for the last seven years has provided tremendous growth and experiences for which her family will always be grateful. She said her life has been touched by many. From being a member on Council to the close relationships developed of new acquaintances. She said she holds a great respect and pride for her tundra home. Ms. Pobrislo commended Council, city manager and city clerk on their visions to bring Bethel into the 21<sup>st</sup> century of technology and development of infrastructure. She continued that many children are watching and learning from each and everyone one of us. Ms. Pobrislo said everyone must always speak the truth to children and teach them well.

**Chief Pettitt**, Bethel Police Chief, provide Council with an up-date on Crime Stoppers. He explained Crime Stoppers was established about two years ago in an attempt to receive anonymous tips to help solve crimes. Chief Pettitt provided a brief background on the organization. He also explained the Police Department is a partner in Crime Stoppers, but does not have the responsibility to lead the organization. He said as involvement dwindled, Crime Stoppers faded away. Chief Pettitt said Crime Stoppers is premature in the Bethel community. He explained to Council that he has directed his staff to develop a Neighborhood Watch Program, which he said might be more suited for Bethel. Chief Pettitt announced that his last day as Chief of Police is March 29, 2002, as he and his wife are moving to California. He thanked Council and the community for its support and said he has enjoyed working in Bethel.

**Ray Watson**, ONC, said ONC supports Ordinance 02-06 with the amendment that Council member Drake will introduce. Mr. Watson explained that Ordinance 02-06 stems from concerns expressed by ONC on behalf of the community. Mr. Watson provided anecdotes to share with Council to justify the concerns of the community. Mr. Watson said he appreciates Council working to introduce an ordinance to help solve the problem. He explained there is a public outcry to clean up the problem areas targeted in the City's ordinance.

**Paul Gregory**, Bethel resident, said there are too many loose dogs. He gave an anecdote of walking to the hospital with loose dogs after him. He explained there are too many children being mauled by loose dogs. He also expressed his concerns about snow machines in that there are no markings for them to follow and that a child was almost hit by a snow machine. He said the City needs some type of signs to direct snow machines or prohibit snow machines in areas where children play. Mr. Gregory also explained Council needs to do something about the snow machine theft. He said people are not respecting property lines. Mr. Gregory reiterated that the snow machine situation is dangerous.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

<b>MOVED BY:</b>	Drake	To approve the minutes of the February 26, 2002 regular meeting
<b>SECONDED BY:</b>	Berger	

*\*Correction noted by city clerk.*

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

<b>MOVED BY:</b>	Berger	To approve the regular agenda and consent agenda after adding new business item F. Ordinance #02-12
<b>SECONDED BY:</b>	Drake	

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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**MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Mayor's Report included the following:

- Letter from Senator Halford to U.S. Senator Ted Stevens — *Re:* Encouraging Senator Stevens to continue supporting the People's Learning Center in the Y-K Delta
- Letter from the Department of Environmental Conservation — *Re:* House Finance Committee is considering eliminating state oversight of any place that sells or serves food and eliminating the oversight of sanitation practices in daycare centers and public facilities. The theory behind this reduction is that communities should and will provide these essential environmental health services if the state does not. This will impact the City of Bethel.
- Letter from Department of Community and Economic Development — *Re:* FY03 State revenue sharing program—data elements
- News clipping — *Re:* Fairbanks still has cheapest groceries. "...the folks in Bethel win the dubious prize of most expensive among the 19 Alaska communities surveyed." Groceries in Bethel cost 84 percent more than in Anchorage—up 19 percent since last year.
- Letter from Municipal Light Power — *Re:* Requesting that Council member Berger participate in a teleconference for the Municipal Advisory Committee
- AML Fax Alert — *Re:* Teleconference for local support of revenue sharing/safe communities and community jails
- House of Representatives Press Release — *Re:* Minimum Wage Hike Measure Passes House—HB 56 establishes \$7.15/hour
- House Finance Committee Press Release — *Re:* Finance releases FY03 Budget Allocations— Holds line on spending; Supports education, services and local assistance
- Senator Donley Press Release — *Re:* Criminal's PFDs to go to victims
- Alaska State Legislature — Bills on the Move
- Governor's Talking Points for the week of February 25, 2002

Vice Mayor Notti asked that a resolution be written opposing the State's proposed elimination of state oversight of any place that sells or serves food and eliminating the oversight of sanitation practices in daycare centers and public facilities.

Council member Berger commented on the news clipping regarding grocery prices in Bethel. Council member Berger explained the UAF grocery survey done in December 2001. He explained that not only does Bethel have the highest food cost, but also that Bethel's food costs over Anchorage food costs significantly increased in one year. Council member Berger requested that, with no objection from Council, Administration contact the three local stores and ask for an explanation as to why they feel Bethel has the most expensive stores. He continued that something is not right about this and he would like it pursued. He said given the fact that Bethel is one of larger communities in rural Alaska, it's not right that Bethel comes in with the highest grocery costs. He further explained that he did a grocery comparison last summer and prices were higher in Bethel. Council member Berger explained the response he got from a local Bethel grocery store was that their prices are based on what the competition charges in Bethel. Council member Berger continued that he would not like to think there is any kind of collusion going on in setting local grocery prices. He asked that Administration follow up on this and give a report at the next regular Council meeting.

## **MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT**

Acting City Manager Young noted the management reports included in Council packets.

## **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Senior Advisory Board**

Council member Berger said the March 8 meeting was postponed and rescheduled for March 15 at 10 a.m.

### **Parks and Recreation Committee**

Council member Short said the committee discussed the Ice Classic Parade and the K-300 organization's presentation on a new building at Datu's Park.

### **Planning Commission**

Council member Notti said the commission is scheduled to meet March 14 at 6:30 p.m.

### **Port Commission**

*Mayor Rodgers was not present.*

### **Public Works Committee**

Council member Drake said the committee has not met since the last Council meeting. He said the next meeting is March 19, 2002 at 12 p.m.

### **Public Safety and Transportation Commission**

*Council seat vacant.*

### **Finance Committee**

*Council seat vacant.*

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### Item A — Ordinance #02-06: Amending Title 9 of the BMC by enacting a civil nuisance abatement program

*Vice Mayor Notti opened the public hearing.*

**Ray Watson**, ONC, reiterated ONC's support of Ordinance #02-06 with the amendment that Council member Drake will introduce. He explained this ordinance is in response to the community elders and said he appreciates Council's actions. Mr. Watson reiterated this issue is a public safety issue and said it is important that Council is proactive.

**James Blake**, Bethel Chamber of Commerce, read a "Position" passed by the Chamber of Commerce in opposition of Ordinance #02-06. The Chamber's Position #02-01 states that the Chamber opposes Ordinance #02-06 for reasons including: "Bethel businesses are not in a position to patrol or monitor their premises during all hours of the day...Business owners or landlords that own or lease property at more than one location are unable to continually monitor or patrol each location...business owners, lessees of business property, or landlords under this ordinance would be financially burdened with fines and would be adversely affected with negative publicity due to being a victim of the actions of others, not necessarily under their control..." Mr. Blake reiterated the Chamber's opposition to Ordinance #02-06.

**Besy Alexie**, Bethel elder, provided testimony in Yup'ik. Elizabeth Sunnyboy translated a summary:

*Ms. Alexie stays mostly inside her house because she is frightened. When she hears noise outside and there are drunks around, she is scared to leave her house. She also explained why this problem makes it difficult for her to sleep and that at [Ms. Alexie's] age it is difficult to deal with the disturbances. Ms. Alexie asked Council to take a look at her area of town and asked Council do something about the problem.*

**Elizabeth Sunnyboy**, Bethel resident, explained that she goes across the slough often and at times she and her family cannot cross the slough because of the activities that take place at the Yukon Hotel with so many drunks. Ms. Sunnyboy also said it is difficult to practice subsistence hunting in the surrounding area. Ms. Sunnyboy asked Council to address this problem. She also explained that sometimes her kids cannot go out and play because of the disturbances.

**Paul Gregory**, Bethel resident, said theft is getting worse and people aren't respecting private property lines. He explained that he doesn't know what the community is going to do about the problem, but said he will do something about the problem. Mr. Gregory said everyone needs to make Bethel a better place to live.

**Rodger Blakesley**, Bethel resident, asked Council if there were zoning laws in place such as a commercial zone where these hotels in question could be located. He gave anecdotes of hotel occurrences.

*10-minute break — Council member Short was off teleconference during the break.*

*Break over — Council member Short was back on teleconference.*

### Item B — Discussion Item: Snow machine theft

**Paul Gregory**, Bethel resident, provided Council with anecdotes in regard to snow machine theft. He said there must be some way to find the people who are stealing snow machines. He said this is a growing concern.

Council member Drake said this problem is deeper than just stealing snow machines. He said there is an underlying issue. Council member Drake continued that he would like to see the City take a lead in forming a community group to work together to reduce juvenile crime, including snow machine theft. He explained the City should notify community organizations of a meeting with a set agenda to identify resources available to mitigate problems such as snow machine theft. He named more than 14 different organizations that could work together to deal with youth. Council member Drake reiterated that the City should lead the effort to bring all of these organizations to the table to identify resources and set measurable goals and objectives.

Council member Short agreed with Council member Drake that the community needs to work together, but said he is worried this would be another City committee that produces a report that will do nothing but sit on a shelf. Council member Short explained the Police Department should patrol more frequently. He also explained that if Council cuts police resources, Council would perpetuate the problem.

Council member Berger also agreed with Council member Drake, but said he has concerns as to how long it would take to seriously address the problem. Council member Berger said the budget cycle is approaching and Council should think about this issue at that time. Council member Berger also said adults need to exercise their prerogative and tell children they can't behave certain ways. He explained parents should know the whereabouts of their kids. He continued that he would like to see the community prepared for next winter to prevent these types of problems.

Council member Drake said he agrees that he does not want a committee to produce another report to sit on a shelf, unused. He reiterated the group would define goals and measure the success of the goals and objectives. Council member Drake said with Council concurrence he would be the Council representative to take the lead in this effort. Council concurred.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Item A — Resolution #02-07: A resolution supporting the People’s Learning Center Project and Supporting the donation of City Land to the Project**

<b>MOVED BY:</b>	Drake	To adopt Resolution #02-07
<b>SECONDED BY:</b>	Short	

Council member Berger asked if it was necessary to select the exact acres to be donated. The city clerk explained that it was necessary so that the land could be donated. Discussion briefly ensued.

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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**Item B — Resolution #02-08: A resolution supporting the Camai Festival**

*Resolution #02-08 passed under the consent agenda.*

**Item C — Introduction — Ordinance #02-09: Amending Chapter 2.52 of the BMC relating to Boards, Commissions and Committees**

*Ordinance #02-09 was introduced under the consent agenda and set for public hearing March 26, 2002.*

**Item D — Introduction — Ordinance #02-10: Amending Chapter 13.04, 13.08 and 13.12 of the BMC relating to notices and billing procedures for utility services**

*Ordinance #02-10 was introduced under the consent agenda and set for public hearing March 26, 2002.*

**Item E — Introduction — Ordinance #02-11: Budget modification**

*Ordinance #02-11 was introduced under the consent agenda and set for public hearing March 26, 2002.*

**Item F — Introduction — Ordinance #02-12: Budget modification**

<b>MOVED BY:</b>	Drake	To introduce Ordinance #02-12 and set public hearing for March 26, 2002
<b>SECONDED BY:</b>	Berger	

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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**COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS**

**Council Member Berger** explained two people would be appointed at the next Council meeting to fill Council vacancies. He encouraged people to let their interest be known.

**Council Member Drake** reiterated that people interested in serving on Council should submit their letter of interest to the city clerk's office. He also said that four Council seats would be up for election this October. Mr. Drake also warned the public to be careful when signing petitions, in that people should be careful to understand what the petition is about.

**Council Member Rodgers** — *not present.*

**Council Member Notti** explained the moose plan in that if the community does not hunt the 84 moose counted, those 84 moose would turn into hundreds of moose that everyone can then hunt at a later time. He said there are plenty of caribou to hunt instead of moose. He encouraged the public to attend a meeting at Fish and Wildlife in regard to the moose plan.

**Council Member Short** explained UAF will offer a RN associate program at the Bethel in the near future.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** — *No executive session.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

<b>MOVED BY:</b>	Drake	To adjourn the meeting.
<b>SECONDED BY:</b>	Berger	

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

**APPROVED THIS 26<sup>th</sup> DAY OF MARCH 2002.**

ATTEST:

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Stanley "Tundy" Rodgers, Mayor

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Colleen Soberay, City Clerk