City of Bethel, Alaska

City Council Minutes

January 12, 1999 | Regular Meeting | Bethel, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Bethel City Council was held on January 12, 1999, at 6:30 p.m. in the Log Cabin, Bethel, Alaska. Mayor Agnes Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

There were present:

Mayor Agnes Phillips
Antone Anvil
Joerene Hout
Dario Notti
Mike O'Brien
Karol Pobrislo
Stanley "Tundy" Rodgers

comprising a quorum of the Council.

Also in attendance were:

Bob Herron, City Manager
Gaye Vaughan, City Clerk

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

Dave Trantham, spoke to the discussion item listed under New Business, compensation for commission/committee members. He wondered how the Council could be thinking of this when they just took the sales tax exemption away from the seniors. He asked that any action in this respect be done by ordinance with a public hearing and a budget amendment. He also asked that the Council make a concerted effort to inform the media and possibly even hold a town meeting.

Mike McKinnon, Senior Planner, DOT/PF, stated he is the program manager for the YK Transportation Plan, which is a twenty-year plan. He was accompanied by Rex Young and David Marshall who would also be available to answer questions.

Billy McCann, stated he is a 5-year Bethel resident and he has rights. He said the seniors have been meeting to come up with a "fix" for the ordinance.

City Manager Herron pointed out the memo from the seniors in the packet.

Council Member Notti asked that an ordinance be drafted for introduction at the next meeting.

MOVED BY:	Notti	To acknowledge sales tax recommendations and have attorney draft ordinance for January 26 meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Anvil	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Mayor Phillips stated the Finance Committee would review this on Thursday.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Corrections were noted to the minutes of November 17 and December 15, 1998.

MOVED BY:	O'Brien	To approve the minutes as corrected.
SECONDED BY:	Pobrislo	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

At the request of the Mayor, City Clerk Vaughan read the consent agenda items by title only.

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

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

Mayor Phillips noted that an Executive Session would be held at the end of the meeting regarding personnel issues. She also added Resolution #99-03, Supporting Census 2000, to the agenda.

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:

> At the Mayor's request, City Clerk Vaughan read a proclamation celebrating the VFW's 100th Anniversary.
> The Mayor noted that the Council had received a Christmas card from former Port Director, Stuart Greydanus.
> Ms. Phillips stated an invitation to make nominations for Volunteer of the Year award had been received.
> Also, received was an invitation to participate in the next publication of an Alaskan book.
> She stated she had been very busy over Christmas with the Lions' Club childrens' party, a party at TWC, and one for ROTC.

The Mayor had received a notice about a solid waste grant.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

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

He spoke about the city mapping project, which will cost approximately $115,000. He noted that this is a very important project for the city. BUC has already requested the first set of maps.

He noted that the first burial in the expanded Ridgecrest Cemetery was directly in front of the new gate near the Teen Center. It will be difficult, but not impossible, for a drill rig to gain access to that area. The City will send out notices asking people to check with the City Clerk on suggested plot locations to prevent this kind of incident in the future.

City Manager Herron announced that Kuskokwim Lighterage was the successful bidder at $5,900 per trip for the ice road.

Mr. Herron advised that negotiations with the union are about to get underway. The current contract ends in six months. He would give Council more information during executive session.

He stated that a site directly behind the new courthouse is the ideal location for a new police station. The site is large enough to house a modern, efficient station and garage with room for access for both police operations and community residents. The site is in very close proximity to the courthouse, city infrastructure and easy tie-ins to the waste heat and water/sewer utilities are the main considerations. Relocation of the recycling center to an area near the landfill makes more sense for its operation. He noted that the recycling center quonset hut is heated by the burning of combustible which will play havoc with the new fresh air exchanger that will be built into the new courthouse. The recycling manager sees no problem with this move.

The City Manager requested Council approval for five days of vacation from February 1 through 5.

MOVED BY:	Notti	To approve five days of vacation for City Manager.
SECONDED BY:	Pobrislo	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Mayor Phillips noted there are vacancies on the Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Port and Public Works Commissions/Committees.

Public Works Committee
Council member O'Brien stated the Committee will meet on January 19. He announced that the new chairman is Paul O'Brien.

Public Safety Commission
Council Member O'Brien stated the Commission did not meet in January. The Commission will next meet on February 1.

Port Commission
Council Member Rodgers stated that the Commission has no scheduled meeting at this time.

Senior Citizens' Advisory Board
Council Member Anvil stated that the SCAB sub-finance committee had met several times. He noted that many seniors were very disappointed in the Council's recent action regarding eliminating the seniors' sales tax exemption. He pointed out that City Manager Herron had attended every meeting.

Finance Committee
Mayor Phillips thanked Mr. Herron for attending the SCAB sub-finance committee meetings as she had to work. She noted that she had talked with Gladys Jung regarding the sales tax issue at the Senior Citizens' Thanksgiving dinner. She announced that the Finance Committee would meet on January 14.

Planning Commission
Council Member Notti stated the Planning Commission tried to meet twice in December but could not get a quorum. He noted that Helen Venes' subdivision, a property dispute and vacation of a right-of-way had been on the agenda.

Parks & Recreation Committee
Council Member Pobrislo stated the Committee had not met since the last Council meeting, but they would be meeting in a work session on Saturday. The next regular meeting would be January 19 at 6 p.m.

Transportation Commission
As Council Member Hout stated that the Commission met in December. Dominic Malaj presented his case and the Commission voted that he could have his license returned. The Commission will have no meeting in January and the next meeting will be February 18. She noted that she had also attended the first meeting of the SCAB sub-finance committee.

OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance #98-30: Amending BMC Section 9.20.010, Curfew. (Council Member O'Brien)

Mayor Phillips called for public testimony.

Lloyd Eggan, stated that he was a member of the Alaska chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, although he was speaking for himself. He spoke against the ordinance. He said curfew laws place the government between parents and children. He would never have wanted the police inserted in issues of trust and responsibility when he was raising his children. He noted that curfew ordinances are generally vague. He also noted that more information was available at ACLU's web site about freedoms and that curfews take away certain freedoms.

MOVED BY:	O'Brien	To adopt Ordinance #98-30.
SECONDED BY:	Rodgers	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Clerk's Note: Council Member Pobrislo left the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion Item – Letter from BNC regarding Ordinance #98-25: Authorizing the Disposal of Lot 15, USS 4117 to the State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources for a New Alaska National Guard Readiness Center and Memorial Park (Adopted November 17, 1998)

City Manager Herron noted that BNC had submitted a letter regarding this ordinance but due to Council meeting dates being changed, it was sent after the meeting. He recommended working with the City Planner and the property owners and coming back to the Council with a recommendation.

MOVED BY:	Rodgers	To direct City Manager to work with Planner and land owners and come back with a recommendation.
SECONDED BY:	O'Brien	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Discussion Item –Compensation for members of commissions and committees (Council Member Notti)

Council Member Notti stated that he makes plans around an evening meeting only to get there and there not be a quorum. He noted that the Planning Commission meeting was cancelled twice in December due to no quorum. Someone had suggested to him that the members receive free water in place of a stipend, but he didn't think that was right. Mr. Notti suggested $20/per member per meeting.

Council Member Rodgers stated these positions were comprised of volunteers and he would like to see them remain volunteers.

Council Member O'Brien suggested that rather then putting off decisions regarding people's livelihood, bring those issued to the City Council. He noted that there are a great many people in Bethel who do public service at no fee.

City Manager Herron noted that there is a 3-unexcused consecutive absences rule. He will review minutes and dismiss those who are missing meetings.

Council Member Notti still believed there should be an incentive. He pointed out that when meetings are cancelled there is also a cost to the city for staff presence and meeting preparation.

Council Member O'Brien noted that the ultimate decisions are made by the Council.

Council Member Hout stated that many organizations provide a stipend to their board members, but that these positions are ones of public service.

As no motion was made, the Mayor continued on the agenda.

Discussion Item – Upcoming APEA Negotiations (City Manager)

City Manager Herron stated the details of this could be discussed in executive session.

Discussion Item – July 4th Holiday (City Manager)

The City Manager noted that July 4 falls on a Sunday in 1999. He would like to be ahead of the game and asked Council whether the city parade and festivities should be held on Sunday or Monday.

Council Member O'Brien stated the last time it was changed to Monday, there was a lot of flack over it. He felt it should be on the 4th.

Mayor Phillips agreed and stated the parade should start at a later time to allow for church goers.

Council Member Rodgers also agreed.

Council Member Notti pointed out that all churches do not meet at the same time.

Council Member Hout said historically the festivities were held on Monday when July 4 was a Sunday. She was amazed at the uproar the last time this happened. She was also in favor of starting the parade later.

Resolution #99-03: Supporting Census 2000 (Mayor Phillips)

MOVED BY:	Hout	To adopt Resolution #99-03
SECONDED BY:	Rodgers	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Mayor Phillips noted that an elder had come into the meeting and asked for a motion to suspend the rules in order for him to address the Council.

MOVED BY:	O'Brien	To suspend the rules in order for citizen to speak to the Council.
SECONDED BY:	Rodgers	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Peter Jacobs, spoke to the Council in Yupik which was translated by Council Member Anvil. He did not want the elders to have to pay sales tax. He said he had been a city employee for 35 years and this is the first time there is a city manager who is doing his job. He added that things are going in the right direction with a local hired to be city manager.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Council Member Hout cautioned the Council against changing meeting dates as people don't always get the message and then miss the meeting. She offered her condolences to the Nick family for their recent loss.

Council Member Notti also expressed his condolences.

Mayor Phillips hoped that everyone had a good holiday season and noted that some are still celebrating Slavik. She also expressed her condolences. She noted that she was without an office for two weeks and had no phone for seven weeks. She enjoyed the time she took off of work.

Council Member Anvil thanked Mr. Herron for all the work he has done. He noted that John "Datu" Samuelson's house had been broken into and property was taken. He felt police patrol should be upgraded.

Council Member Rodgers also expressed his sympathy to the Nick family. He offered his apologies for missing the last meeting, noting that it had been his son's birthday. He also pointed that people who start rumors should talk to his face not behind his back.

Council Member O'Brien also thanked the City Manager. He also thanked the Council for their work even though there may be battles. He echoed Mr. Rodger's words about rumors.

Clerk's Note: Council Member Pobrislo returned to the Council meeting.

Council Member Pobrislo thanked the Mayor for allowing her to attend her son's Jr. ROTC change in command.

The Council recessed for a break prior to an Executive Session at 8:15 p.m.

MOVED BY:	Pobrislo	To go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues.
SECONDED BY:	Notti	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

The Council meeting was reconvened at 8:46 p.m.

MOVED BY:	Pobrislo	To adjourn the meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Rodgers	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

APPROVED THIS 27TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1999.

Agnes L. Phillips, City Mayor

ATTEST:

Gaye J. Vaughan, City Clerk