
City of Bethel, Alaska Finance Committee Minutes

March 1, 2004

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on March 1, 2004, at 6:30 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers.

MOVED BY:	Short	Nominate Committee member Leinberger as acting Chair in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
SECONDED BY:	Thompson	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Acting Chair Leinberger called the meeting to order at 6:57 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Hippler	Leinberger
Nettles	Short
Thompson	Venes
<i>(Vacant)</i>	

Excused absence(s): Nettles, Venes

Unexcused absence(s): none

Also in attendance were the following:

Robert Strahan, Finance Director
Laurie Walters, Asst. Finance Director/Committee Secretary

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

There was no one to speak.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to approve.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY:	Short	To approve the agenda as presented.
SECONDED BY:	Thompson	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT

Finance Director Strahan reviewed his most recent manager’s report, which went to Council, with the Committee members.

Acting Chair Leinberger asked if at the last Finance Committee meeting there was any discussion about finance committee members attending the budget work sessions with Council. Members concluded that it would be a good idea to have all finance committee members attend as many work sessions as possible.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Item A — Finance Director’s Update on RFP for New or Existing Revenue

Finance Director Strahan reported that he ceased progress on developing a RFP once he saw the article in the paper authored by the Mayor and Vice-Mayor. He thought it would be a conflict of interest for him to pursue an RFP, when it was apparent that he Mayor and Vice-Mayor had a different opinion of the direction the City should go to identifying new revenue or existing revenue enhancements.

NEW BUSINESS

Item A — Mayor Short’s Newspaper Article: Make Bethel a Better Place to Live

Committee Member Short stated that first the Finance Committee needed to talk about resources necessary to carry out the direction given by Council in regards to looking at revenue sources, and that he was open to input or differing ideas from the committee. Discussion ensued as to the purpose of the expanded group suggested by the Mayor and Vice Mayor. Committee members discussed whether the ideas the committee would come up with would be accepted by the community, and how difficult it may be to get consensus amongst a community task force of 15 individuals. The committee acknowledged that no matter what options the task force comes up with, selling the ideas to the community will be paramount. Committee also discussed the financial situation of the Utility Enterprise Fund.

The committee reviewed the potential revenue sources that were noted in the article written by the Mayor and Vice-Mayor to determine which items the Finance Department could gather information on and which would need the assistance of a consultant.

MOVED BY:	Short	To have the Finance Committee direct: City Administration to come up with preliminary information by March 11 that covers any existing research or data on first class city & a property tax (grant writer to resurrect information gathered about four years ago), Finance Director to look at options for increasing sales tax, Finance Director to do preliminary research regarding alcohol sales within like communities and different systems, City Manager consult with DOT to look at feasibility of the Bethel airport being assumed by the City of Bethel, and the Finance Department look at a vehicle registration fee and a heavy
SECONDED BY:	Leinberger	

		equipment tax and report back to Finance Committee during the special meeting on March 11.
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VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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A brief discussion regarding the March 11 special meeting ensued. Committee members agreed to talk about getting other community members on board to make the 15 person task force and to see a time line for the process.

CHAIR’S COMMENTS

Chair Venes was absent. Acting Chair Leinberger stated that his initial reaction to the “gang” of 15 was negative because he feels as though if there were people really interested in this process they should be at every Finance Committee meeting. He worries about the expanded community task force being comprised of people with special interests and people who are not interested in seeing their own expenses increased as a result of the City implementing new taxes, fees or rates to increase revenue. He wonders how effective that process will be.

FINANCE DIRECTOR’S COMMENTS

Finance Director Strahan sees the newspaper article as the view point of only two Council members. He stated that the City should distribute a survey to the community to inform them of the revenue enhancement options and get them to buy off on the ideas. He feels strongly that once all of the revenue information is collected that the community should be given an opportunity to provide input on what their priorities are as far as the services the City provides and what services they would be willing to pay more for.

A lengthy discussion occurred about restructuring water and sewer rates to eliminate the continued net loss in the Utility Enterprise Fund. And whether an across the board increase or aggregate rates is the better approach.

MOVED BY:	Thompson	To present an ordinance to Council to increase water and sewer rates by ten percent across the board.
SECONDED BY:	Hippler	

Committee discussed the need to have whoever is acting as Chairperson of the Finance Committee be on hand at the Council meeting to speak to the ordinance in an effort to reinforce to the Council that this ordinance is supported by all members of the Finance Committee.

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Hippler thinks water and sewer rate increase is a very positive action. If rate increase does or doesn’t get approved by Council, thinks next step is to see if City can save money contracting out water and sewer service. Very excited, thinks increased rates is good deal.

Member Nettles was not in attendance.

Member Short had no comments.

Member Thompson had no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY:	Short	To adjourn the meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Thompson	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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With no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

APPROVED THIS ___ DAY OF _____, 2004.

Helen Venes, Chair

Laurie Walters, Committee Secretary

City of Bethel, Alaska Finance Committee Minutes

March 22, 2004

Special Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Finance Committee was held on March 22, 2004, at 6:30 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers.

Vice Chair Nettles called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Hippler	Leinberger
Nettles	Short
Thompson	
<i>(Vacant)</i>	

Excused absence(s): Venes
Unexcused absence(s): none

Also in attendance were the following:

Robert Strahan, Finance Director
Laurie Walters, Asst. Finance Director/Committee Secretary

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

There was no one to speak.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee member Hippler noted that member Venes was listed as present and absent, when she was only absent.

MOVED BY:	Thompson	To approve the minutes as amended.
SECONDED BY:	Short	

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

MOVED BY:	Short	To approve the agenda as presented.
SECONDED BY:	Thompson	

VOTE ON MOTION

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT

Finance Director Strahan reported that the City received an unqualified audit for FY03, but that significant operating losses were realized in both the General Fund and the Utility Enterprise Fund. He touched on the importance for meetings such as tonights with respect to the City's revenues failing to keep up with rising expenses. He also stated that the FY05 budgets were coming in from the various City departments due to be delivered to the City Manager by March 15. Finance Director Strahan provided a sample copy of the FY04 budget comparison sheets that he and the new general ledger accountant/analyst had been working on and explained the format and information and then responded to questions from the committee members.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Item A — Finance Director's Update on RFP for Sales Tax Audits

Finance Director Strahan reported that the RFP for local sales tax audit services would be available by March 18, and then gave the proposed timeline of events such as selection, contract award and commencement of audits.

Item B — Results from Cities Contacted Concerning Revenue Issues

Finance Director Strahan presented the information compiled on the different revenue sources the Committee had been discussing. The Finance Director noted that the City had difficulty receiving some of the information the committee was interested in reviewing. Committee member Short expressed strong interest in getting further information on Dillingham and Nome in regards to taxes and the amount of revenue each tax produces. He also wanted more complete information on Dillingham's and Nome's transition from 2nd to 1st class city. Discussion ensued on what the benefit of a first class city would be.

Committee member Lienberger suggested that during this process of trying to identify additional revenue sources the Committee keep the Council updated so that they don't get to thinking that the Finance Committee is not making any progress.

Committee members requested the Finance Department gather additional information on enplanement statistics for the past three years from other cities such as Dillingham and Ketchikan, to include airport revenue information for Kenai, Unalaska and the State's information for Bethel.

Finance Director Strahan reported that the information on the liquor store option was not yet available.

Discussions turned to water and sewer issues and several Committee members questioned why the water and sewer 10% acrossed the board rate increase ordinance was not prepared as the Committee requested. Finance Director Strahan explained that he did not agree with doing a generic 10% increase now and having to come back to make yet another adjustment in what could be as little as a few months that would reflect the aggregate rate schedule that he believes needs to be done. Even after the explanation, some members were concerned that the Finance Director, despite the unanimous wishes of the Finance Committee, had not prepared the ordinance.

Discussion ensued regarding aggregate rates and installation of meters on both houses and trucks. Committee member Lienberger stated that having had the opportunity to discuss the issue further, it

was good that the Committee's original request for the preparation of an ordinance increasing water sewer rates 10% across the board was not prepared, since the Committee now is in agreement to proceed in a different direction with rate increases.

MOVED BY:	Lienberger	To rescind the motion made and passed at the March 1, 2004 meeting that requested an ordinance be presented to Council to increase water and sewer rates by ten percent across the board.
SECONDED BY:	Short	
VOTE ON MOTION		
Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.		

Committee requested that the Finance Director prepare "equalization rates" for water and sewer and have the information available for the Committee by the next Finance Committee meeting scheduled for the coming Friday. Committee was also interested in the cost per gallon for hauled service versus cost per gallon for piped service.

The Committee revisiting the purpose of the community task force that was to assist the Finance Committee in the discussions of new revenue sources. It was requested that advertising and selection of member for the community task force be added to the next agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

None

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chair Venes was absent.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Finance Director Strahan stated that he wants more than anything to move forward with enhancing revenue, especially with the results if the FY03 financial statements. As the Finance Department gets caught up, he plans to bring many things to the Committee that he believes should already have been implemented at the City of Bethel.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Lienburger questioned whether there had been any discussion about floating bonds to complete the piped water and sewer project and if VSW could participate in the repayment of bonds. Committee member Thompson was not sure, but thought it was an interesting idea. Mr. Leinberger thinks that if the committee can address water and sewer rate equalization, the committee will be getting to where they need to be. Down the road he hopes the City will tie the rates to CPI and that Council will become aware that rate adjustments should be an annual thing. He is happy the water and sewer rate issue is moving forward to and end result that he thought was happening two weeks ago.

Member Hippler had no comments.

Member Thompson really wants to get water and sewer revenue issues resolved.

Member Short had no comments.

Member Nettles thinks equalization on water and sewer rates is a good idea. He stated that his interpretation of the eight member task force goes back to Council member Trantham's statement about the Finance Committee's inability to get quorums for their meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY:	Short	To adjourn the meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Lienberger	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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With no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

APPROVED THIS ___ DAY OF _____, 2004.

Helen Venes, Chair

Laurie Walters, Committee Secretary

City of Bethel, Alaska

Finance Committee Minutes

March 26, 2004

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on March 26, 2004, at 6:30 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers.

Chair Venes called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Hippler	Leinberger	Short
Thompson	Venes	(Vacant)

Excused absence(s): Nettles

Unexcused absence(s): none

Also in attendance were the following:

Robert Strahan, Finance Director
Laurie Walters, Asst. Finance Director/Committee Secretary
Bob Herron, City Manager

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

There was no one to speak.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY:	Thompson	To approve the agenda as presented.
SECONDED BY:	Short	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Item A — Results from Cities Contacted Concerning Revenue Issues

Finance Director Strahan recapped the additional information collected regarding revenues. Committee discussed the alcohol beverage delivery site, privately operated liquor stores and City run

liquor stores. Committee Member Lienberger recalled the Committee previously requesting information regarding Fort Yukon’s liquor store. This information will be provided at a later date.

Committee Member Short questioned whether additional information had been gathered regarding airport operations. Discussions followed about the need to get enplanement numbers and revenue information from the airports previously discussed in order to make any educated decisions. City Manager Bob Herron suggested that he request Kip Knudsen, DOT Commissioner of Aviation, to travel to Bethel to make a presentation to the Finance Committee. The Committee agreed to the City Manager’s suggestion.

Committee Member Short reconfirmed that the Committee was asking the City Manager to schedule a presentation by Kip Knudsen to answer the airport questions, and the Finance Director to follow up with Fort Yukon regarding liquor sales and gather information on revenues generated from Nome’s 5% sales tax and 4% hotel/motel tax.

Item B — Cost of Water

Finance Director Strahan reviewed with the Committee the spreadsheet he put together that shows the cost to the City to make a gallon of water. Discussion ensued whether the amount listed for depreciation was correct, how to figure the rate for sewer from these numbers while taking into consideration those who are only receiving sewer service, and what portion of these expenses relate only to piped versus hauled services and water versus sewer, etc.

MOVED BY:	Short	To direct the Finance Department to prepare a draft ordinance with revised cost for piped water and sewer, separated costs for water and sewer, for deliberation at the next Finance Committee meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Lienberger	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Item C — Discussion-Advertising for and Selection of Community Task Form members

Committee Member Short reported that the FY03 financial statements reflect a total loss to the General Fund of nearly \$1.2 million and that several more years like last year will cause the City to spend the balance of all the funds. Committee Member Short stated that many members of Council are really depending on the Committee to come up with suggestions and this puts a lot of pressure on this Committee to come up new revenues now! He stated that the Committee just had a great discussion regarding water and sewer and that is one way to stop the bleeding. He noted that the Committee has gathered a lot of good information that can be put into an informational packet. Committee Member Short expressed concern that the Committee will not meet the mid-April deadline, but suggested that through the month of April the Committee continue to work towards some recommendations for Council to consider during the budget process.

Committee Member Short suggested that the Committee ask the Finance Department or Administration to advertise beginning next week to solicit names of community members who would be interested in having a discussion with the Finance Committee over the next 6 weeks. He further suggested that at the next Finance Committee meeting the Committee set up the process for selecting those members (depending if community shows any interest), hold two or three public

meetings to get the will of the community and then try to deliberate and come up with some sort of recommendation for Council's consideration.

MOVED BY:	Short	Direct Finance Department to announce in community applications to serve on the City of Bethel community task force on improvement of services and infrastructure for the next 10 days and at the next Finance Committee meeting take those into consideration, as well as an overall plan and timeline for the next six weeks.
SECONDED BY:	Lienberger	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Committee Member Short left the meeting at this point.

The Committee returned to the discussion of cost of water. Discussions regarding funding depreciation and establishing a separate bank account for it ensued. Several committee members felt that this would place at least a psychological barrier between the City Council and the funds to make them think twice before approving use of those funds for other purposes. Committee members agreed to postpone any plans to recommend doing so until the City starts to realize positive cash flow in those funds so that the depreciation *can* be funded.

Committee Member Lienberger asked if there was any kind of figure of what it would cost to convert the entire city to piped services. From the information provided earlier in the meeting Committee Member Lienberger recalled that piped services were a tenth of the expense of hauled services yet consumed twice the amount of water than hauled services required. He has real concern than VSW funding has a short life. Finance Director Strahan responded that Public Works Director Greg Sargent also thinks the funding could be in jeopardy unless the City is willing to prove its commitment to the piped projects by investing money into the project and assisting with some of the costs. Discussion ensued regarding whether construction of a water treatment facility or distribution site, located behind Blueberry Subdivision, would be a worthy investment that would show VSW the City is willing to participate and is committed. The Committee also discussed the possibility of issuing bonds to pay for such a project.

MOVED BY:	Hippler	Request Finance Director to research the cost of putting a new water treatment facility in Blueberry Sub and research what expected cost decreases what result and to research what benefit VSW would provide in response to this plan
SECONDED BY:	Lienberger	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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NEW BUSINESS

None

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chair Venes stated that she had been gone quite a bit the last couple of months and doesn't see that changing in the near future. She proposed that she step down and let someone else accept the

position. The Committee Members encouraged her to wait until the next meeting to do so when Vice Chair Nettles would be present. Chair Venes agreed. She thanked the Committee for their work and reported that she had been hearing positive things about the Committee progress.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Finance Director Strahan stated that he is very, very busy and has been criticized somewhat for not having some things completed, but doesn't think those on the outside really understand how much time and effort it takes to run the department, fixing problems, and hire and train new staff. He does however see that changing in the future because of new staff and being fully staffed now. He wants to be able to move into a planning focus.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Thompson said it was nice to have two meetings so close together. He thinks the first thing to do is get rates increased and then the rest of what is being discussed is exciting.

Member Hippler agreed that the first priority is to get water and sewer to break even. He thinks the community task force will be of assistance in attempting City Council to do that.

Member Lienberger agreed that water and sewer rates are the first priority. He also believes that when the plan is presented to Council it should be couched with a somewhat guaranteed annual CPI increase tied to it, so you don't have to wait ten years to increase rates. He noted that he was concerned with the way the dumpster ordinance was handled, not so much the details as much as the financial aspects. Committee Member Lienberger felt strongly that it should have gone through the Finance Committee before the Council voted on the ordinance.

Member Short left the meeting earlier.

Member Nettles was absent.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY:	Thompson	To adjourn the meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Hippler	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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With no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

APPROVED THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2004.

Helen Venes, Chair

Laurie Walters, Committee Secretary

City of Bethel, Alaska

Finance Committee Minutes

April 29, 2004

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on April 29, 2004, at 6:30 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers.

Vice Chair Nettles called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Hiplier	Leinberger	Nettles
Short	Thompson	(<i>Vacant</i>)

Excused absence(s): Venes

Unexcused absence(s): none

Also in attendance were the following:

Robert Strahan, Finance Director
Laurie Walters, Asst. Finance Director/Committee Secretary

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

There was no one to speak.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY:	Short	To approve the agenda as presented.
SECONDED BY:	Lienberger	

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

MOVED BY:	Short	To approve the minutes of the special March 22, 2004 meeting as presented.
SECONDED BY:	Lienberger	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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MOVED BY:	Short	To approve the minutes of the regular March 26, 2004 meeting as presented.
SECONDED BY:	Thompson	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT

Finance Director Strahan reported the Finance Department is very busy, with the budget still being top priority. Finance Director, Assistant Finance Director and City Manager continue to meet with departments to discuss budgets and participate in the budget work sessions with Council.

Committee Member Short added there had been two budget work sessions to date, along with one special Council meeting for budget discussions. He stated it was clear and evident that this year is more difficult due to higher expenditures and revenues that seem to be holding steady. The Committee was informed about some of the remedies Council had discussed to alleviate the budget constraints. Committee Member Short concluded the Council is very interested in getting ideas from the Finance Committee.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Item A — Presentation by Kip Knudsen, D.O.T. Commissioner of Aviation

Mr. Knudsen made his presentation to the Finance Committee members highlighting some statistics of other airports in the Lower 48 and some within Alaska. He also noted some of the benefits and risks of the City assuming responsibility of the airport and clarified that revenues realized from operation of the airport could *not* be diverted to the General Fund or any other fund to help pay for other needs, they must be used for airport purposes.

Finance Committee members asked additional questions of Mr. Knudsen.

MOVED BY:	Short	Table the discussion regarding assumption of the Bethel airport until further notice.
SECONDED BY:	Hiplier	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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The Vice Chairman called for a 5 minute break at 7:30 p.m. He called the meeting back to order at 7:37 p.m.

Item B — Discussion-Community Task Force

Committee Member Hiplier presented his vision of this discussion to be setting a hard and fast plan to meet the Council's deadline. Committee Member Short informed the members of the requirement to adopt the FY05 budget by June 15. He stated that revenues are the problem and the City is having to look at options which include partially funding a department(s) to allow time for other agencies to step up to the plate or cut positions across the board. He has heard from a lot of people that they would be willing to increase sales tax. Committee member Short impressed on the committee members the need to accelerate the process.

Discussion ensued regarding whether the accelerated process would include revenues that need voter approval or first focus on only revenue streams controlled by City Council. Committee members agreed that controllable revenues would be considered first.

Committee members revisited the water and sewer rate increase issue questioning whether this would be within the scope of the community task force. The Committee members clarified their

unanimous opinion that evaluation of rates and recommendations for water and sewer rates is something that can be performed by the Finance Department. Committee Member Short expressed his continued frustration that the Finance Committee still doesn't have the draft ordinance for equalization of water and sewer rates in front of them for review. After further discussion, Finance Director Strahan committed to having the draft ordinance ready by the special Finance Committee meeting scheduled for Friday, May 7.

The discussion turned back to the community task force and what the Committee was interested in having submitted in the Letter of Interest.

MOVED BY:	Short	At the next Finance Committee meeting select eight members to serve on the community task force.
SECONDED BY:	Thompson	

Committee members discussed the schedule for the Community Task Force meetings and determined meetings will be held each Friday in May beginning at 6:30 p.m. Some members suggested that the number of members be reduced to six. The Committee agreed to have 5:00 p.m. May 4, 2004 be the deadline for Letters of Interest and asked that the Letters of Interest be emailed to the Committee members on Wednesday, May 5, for review.

MOVED BY:	Thompson	To amend the previous motion to reduce the number of members selected for the community task force to six.
SECONDED BY:	Lienberger	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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MOVED BY:	Short	To add discussion of sales tax after water and sewer rate increase to the next agenda.
SECONDED BY:	Lienberger	

Discussion about whether sales tax should be one of the first revenues to be discussed by the community task force, or if it should be revenues the Council has control over. Committee Member Thompson expressed concern about rushing. He thinks it would be better to wait on sales tax and see if Council passes a budget with Senior Center and Youth Services only partially funded, then put sales tax out to the voters after the community has gotten the message. Community Member Short stressed to the rest of the Committee his concern that if the Finance Committee doesn't move quickly enough the Council may decide the Finance Committee's recommendations aren't necessary and proceed without them.

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Committee Member Short read a resolution that he was placing on the next agenda for the Committee's consideration asking Council to request Wal-Mart to schedule a site visit to ascertain the feasibility of opening a store in Bethel. Committee Member Lienberger reported Wal-Mart had previously made a presentation to the Chamber of Commerce, but felt Bethel did not have the population or the income per capita to support a store. Committee Member Short noted Wal-Mart's position may be open to change since being approached by Senator Murkowski. Committee Member

Lienberger stated he would vote against it because of the hardship it would pose to small business owners in Bethel.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chair Venes was absent from the meeting.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Finance Director Strahan apologized for not getting things done. He presented to the Committee members the proposed Finance Department budget Council would be considering on May 4, 2004. There were no comments.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Hipplier – no comments

Member Lienberger stated Committee needs to stay ahead of the budget wave. If the Finance Committee doesn't do the work, Council is likely to do it for them and that could cause potential grave problems.

Member Thompson –obvious the airport doesn't make sense. Water and sewer are still the priority.

Member Short encouraged the Committee members to attend the Council meetings and budget work sessions. The next budget work session should be enlightening especially in regards to the philosophical issues of the budget. He also reported the vacancy on City Council.

Member Nettles reported he listened to Council meeting on radio and felt strange to have Council discussing issues the Finance Committee was planning to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY:	Short	To adjourn the meeting.
SECONDED BY:	Thompson	

VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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With no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 8.30 p.m.

APPROVED THIS ___ DAY OF _____, 2004.

Helen Venes, Chair

Laurie Walters, Committee Secretary