



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, MARCH 14, 2022  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

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The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date, following a 5:30 p.m. Work Session on the Golden Heart Plaza Lease, to conduct a Regular Meeting of the Fairbanks City Council via Zoom webinar and at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, with Mayor pro tem Cleworth (Seat A) presiding and with the following Council Members in attendance:

Council Members Present: June Rogers, Seat B  
Valerie Therrien, Seat C  
Aaron Gibson, Seat D  
Lonny Marney, Seat E  
Jim Clark, Seat F

Absent: Mayor Jim Matherly

Also Present: Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer (remotely)  
D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk  
Paul Ewers, City Attorney  
Michael Sanders, Chief of Staff  
Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely)  
Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director (remotely)  
Ron Dupee, Police Chief  
Rick Sweet, Deputy Police Chief  
Clem Clooten, Building Official (remotely)  
Jeff Jacobson, Public Works Director  
Robert Pristash, City Engineer (remotely)

### INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

### FLAG SALUTATION

Mayor pro tem Cleworth lead the Flag Salutation.

### CEREMONIAL MATTERS

Mayor pro tem Cleworth introduced new officer Stephen Hancock and gave a brief history of his experience. Deputy Chief Sweet administered Ofc. Hancock's Oath of Office, and his daughter pinned him with his badge.

## CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Leslie Young, Explore Fairbanks – L. Young shared that she was the manager of Conventions, Meetings, and Sales with Explore Fairbanks and gave an update on tourism in Fairbanks. She noted that the Society of Travel Writers had recently visited and gave a brief history of the organization. She stated that Explore Fairbanks had taken the visitors to various attractions in the area.

David van den Berg, Downtown Association (DTA) – D. van den Berg spoke to the high-density development tax incentive passed by the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) for military facility zones. He stated that there is a plan for the downtown area that is also moving through the FNSB, but it is moving very slowly and may not carry the intended effect if it is not addressed more quickly. He went on to state that the discussion regarding Golden Heart Plaza and the potential to privatize the property could support the FNSB Downtown Plan. He spoke to the military facility zones and the potential to revitalize the many vacant lots in the downtown area. He concluded by asking that the City engage with those working on the Downtown Plan so that it might be more successful.

**Ms. Therrien** asked if the DTA would be in support of similarly proposed tax deferrals within the City; D. van den Berg indicated that they would.

**Mr. Clark** inquired about the ownership of the vacant lots mentioned; D. van den Berg stated that most were privately-owned, and some had been listed for sale through Tom Roberts Realty.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** asked D. van den Berg if he had attended the FNSB Work Session with the consultant for the Downtown Plan. D. van den Berg stated that he did attend but noted that it had been difficult to provide input. He added that the current plan presumed a lot of City powers, giving it the potential to go badly.

Hearing no more requests for in-person comment, individuals on Zoom were heard next.

Julie Smyth, Fairbanks – J. Smyth spoke in support of Resolution No. 4981, adding that it is included in many indigenous cultures. She stated that keeping religion out of government is important, and the land acknowledgment would provide recognition of the culture that existed before us and help support diversity and end racism.

Kasey Casort, Fairbanks – K. Casort spoke in support of Resolution No. 4981, adding that it was a minimum reparation for living on stolen land. She shared that she had first learned of the violent history in an Alaska Studies class in high school. She noted that while religion is intended to be kept separate from government, the City provides an invocation before each meeting and a land acknowledgement would not be any different.

Robert Shields, Fairbanks – R. Shields shared his progress with finding a developer for the Polaris Building, adding that he has had a long love affair with the building and the community. He went on to state that the historic site should be honored even if it required the building to be demolished. He noted the various grant opportunities regarding vertical farming and economic revitalization. R. Shields stated that a petition had begun to coordinate a work session with the City and Gary Gilliam, who will be speaking at the Annual Regenerative Planet Summit on April 22, 2022.

Brenna Carlson, Fairbanks – B. Carlson spoke in support of Resolution No. 4981, adding that Fairbanks is a culturally rich community. She stated that tourism is positively impacted by the area’s celebration of indigenous history. She added that while the community profits from Alaska’s history, there is more it can do to recognize that history. She went on to state that both the FNSB and the FNSB School Board provide land acknowledgements prior to meetings and encouraged the City to do so as well.

Phoebe Gonzales Rohrbacher, Ester – P. Gonzales Rohrbacher spoke in favor of Resolution No. 4981, adding that it is a small and simple opportunity to recognize and publicly state that we are on the lands of the Lower Tanana Dena people. She added that it is a good place to start an era of truth and justice and end discrimination.

Hearing no more requests for comment, **Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared Citizens’ Comments closed.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA**

**Mr. Clark**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda and Consent Agenda.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for objection to the APPROVAL of the Agenda and hearing none, so ORDERED.

City Clerk Snider read the Consent Agenda into the record.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of February 28, 2022

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

**SPECIAL ORDERS**

- a) The Fairbanks City Council heard interested citizens concerned with the following Liquor License Applications for Renewal:

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
5291	The Attic	Beverage Dispensary – Duplicate	The Last Roundup, LLC	2701 S. Cushman Street (upstairs)
4344	Bahn Thai Restaurant	Restaurant/Eating Place	Somnuk, LLC	541 Third Avenue

**Ms. Therrien**, seconded by **Mr. Gibson**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the Liquor License Applications for Renewal.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for testimony and hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO WAIVE PROTEST ON THE LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICATIONS FOR RENEWAL AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Gibson, Rogers, Therrien, Clark, Marney  
NAYS: None

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- b) The Fairbanks City Council heard interested citizens concerned with the following Marijuana License Application for Transfer of Ownership:

Type/License: Marijuana Product Manufacturing Facility, License #18493  
DBA: North Star Fire  
Applicant: North Star Fire, LLC  
Location: 3780 Leasure Street, Unit A, Fairbanks  
From Owner: Petrichor, LLC  
From DBA: Petrichor, LLC  
From Location: 3780 Leasure Street, Unit A, Fairbanks

**Mr. Marney**, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the Marijuana License Application for Transfer of Ownership.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for testimony and hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO WAIVE PROTEST ON THE MARIJUANA LICENSE APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Marney, Cleworth, Clark, Gibson, Rogers, Therrien  
NAYS: None

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

- c) The Fairbanks City Council heard interested citizens concerned with the following Liquor License Application for Transfer of Location and Ownership and Restaurant Designation Permit:

Type/License: Restaurant/Eating Place, License #3381  
DBA: Bahn Thai Rama Restaurant  
Applicant: Somnuk, LLC  
Location: 338 Old Steese Highway, Fairbanks  
From Owner: C J Hot Pot & Asian Cuisine, Inc.  
From DBA: Bei Jing Hot Pot Asian Cuisine  
From Location: 1694 Airport Way, Fairbanks

**Mr. Clark**, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the Liquor License Application for Transfer of Location and Ownership and Restaurant Designation Permit.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for testimony and hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO WAIVE PROTEST ON THE LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER OF LOCATION AND OWNERSHIP AND RESTAURANT DESIGNATION PERMIT AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Rogers, Marney, Therrien, Clark, Gibson, Cleworth

NAYS: None

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Mr. Clark** shared his appreciation to the Polaris Work Group, the City, and Senator Murkowski for acquiring federal funding to demolish the Polaris Building, adding that it was a very big task. He clarified that he did not support the entire federal infrastructure bill. He questioned whether the City might have been able to put funds aside for the project when the Polaris Group was commissioned and possibly paid for it without federal assistance. He expressed hope that the building would be demolished and something positive would come from it. He spoke in support of the Fairbanks Curling Club, adding that he had participated in his first bonspiel with his daughter and had a very good time. He encouraged others to check it out.

**Ms. Therrien** congratulated Ofc. Hancock and welcomed his family. She expressed concern for the security of the Golden Heart Plaza, adding that it has been a wonderful community asset.

**Mr. Marney** thanked Ofc. Hancock and his family for coming to Fairbanks and expressed his appreciation for the success of the lateral hire program.

**Ms. Rogers** welcomed Ofc. Hancock and shared her appreciation of his family's involvement. She noted that peace officers fulfill a very important role in the community, not the least of which is providing a sense of security. She went on to speak about the earlier Work Session, urging Council Members to heavily consider the information provided by Julie Jones. **Ms. Rogers** stated that J. Jones has been working in her capacity since 2004 for the same compensation and felt that she deserved an increase.

**Mr. Gibson** stated that the letter to the editor in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner (FDNM) regarding the heavy-handedness of the Fairbanks Parking Authority seemed justified, adding that perhaps a discussion was needed regarding citations.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** spoke to the letter in the FDNM and stated that the author had intended on attending at the meeting. He explained that the man had been wrongfully cited for improperly parking where parking lines are indecipherable, and the signs are not clear. He noted that J. Jones works for Festival Fairbanks and any increases to its employees' wages should be addressed within the organization. He stated that changing the amounts disbursed to organizations would require an ordinance, noting that changes affect other room rental tax disbursements. **Mayor pro tem Cleworth** went on to explain that the Downtown Task Force, as mentioned by D. van den Berg, was created years ago under FNSB Mayor Kassel. He stated that the City had not been involved

until a consultant had been brought on board, and he clarified that the City would have the benefit of approving the plan prior to implementation. He expressed hope that the original task force would be able to offer input to ensure a responsible plan was drafted.

**Mr. Marney** added his congratulations to Dispatcher Angela Modrell for acquiring her leadership award and thanked her for all the hard work she has done for the City.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** added his congratulations and thanks, noting that A. Modrell had appeared on the front page of the FDNM.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a) Resolution No. 4981 – A Resolution Approving the Reading of a Land Acknowledgement at the Beginning of Regular City Council Meetings. Introduced by (former) Council Member Kun and Council Members Therrien and Rogers. POSTPONED from the Regular Meeting of January 17, 2022.

*The motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 4981 was made by Ms. Rogers and seconded by Ms. Therrien at the November 9, 2021 Regular Meeting and remained on the floor.*

**Ms. Therrien** spoke in favor of the resolution, noting the strong relationship between the City and the local Native community.

**Ms. Rogers** noted that there had been a lot of extenuating circumstances that had delayed the Fairbanks Diversity Council's (FDC) recommendation, including changes in its membership; she clarified that it was not due to a lack of interest or effort.

**Mr. Marney** asked if the FDC had adopted its own land acknowledgement. **Ms. Rogers** stated that some members have personally provided acknowledgements.

**Mr. Marney** stated that he admired Ms. Kun's personal commitment to providing a land acknowledgment and suicide hotline information at each meeting, noting that it was truly heartfelt. He stated he did not feel that a generic, repeated acknowledgement given at each meeting would provide the same sentiment. He clarified that it would be appropriate for anyone who wished to provide an acknowledgement to be allowed to do so, adding that it would have more meaning. **Ms. Rogers** offered support for Mr. Marney's suggestion, adding that FDC members would likely appreciate the opportunity to do so.

**Mr. Gibson** asked if there had been discussion regarding the historical context and if the FDC had consulted others. **Ms. Rogers** stated that the University had been contacted as had the Denakkanaaga Elders. **Mr. Gibson** expressed disappointment at not receiving a letter of support from those organizations. **Ms. Rogers** reminded the Council that (former) Council Member Kun had introduced the resolution after vetting it through various organizations.

**Mr. Marney** asked if Ms. Rogers would be willing to provide a land acknowledgment as Ms. Kun had; **Ms. Rogers** indicated that she would.



**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** clarified that he believed Mr. Marney was asking Ms. Rogers if she would provide a land acknowledgement under her comments and not at the beginning of meetings. **Ms. Rogers** stated that the Council already provides an invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of each meeting, adding that it would be equally respectful to also provide a land acknowledgement.

**Ms. Rogers** asked if Mr. Marney thought she should provide an acknowledgement based on her FDC membership. **Mr. Marney** clarified that he was not in favor of the resolution and was seeking a solution outside of adding it to the beginning of meetings.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** stated that it is not unusual for the Council to be asked to read things at the beginning of meetings, such as the Bill of Rights or the Ten Commandments, but those items have not been implemented. He noted that the procedure had recently been changed to eliminate the reading of the City's mission statement at the beginning of meetings. He stated he would rather see something meaningful installed in Council Chambers; he commented that the public's opportunity to provide citizens' comments has been repeatedly shortened.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to AMEND Resolution No. 4981, by replacing "read at the beginning of Regular City Council meetings" with "added to the City's historical documents and displayed in the Council Chambers."

**Ms. Therrien** stated she found the amendment to be disingenuous, adding that the time it would take to read an acknowledgement would be short. She stated that the Council should present the acknowledgement at the beginning of each meeting the same way the FNSB Assembly and School Board currently do. She noted that a failure to pass the resolution would be an insult to the Native community.

**Mr. Gibson** shared that he had researched the FNSB policy regarding the reading of a land acknowledgment and stated that it was being done at the discretion of the of the presiding officer.

**Ms. Rogers** emphasized the importance to the community for the resolution to be passed without the amendment. She added that a historical document could also be displayed in the Council Chambers and that she would personally ensure that the acknowledgement would be read in a meaningful manner at each meeting.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 4981 BY REPLACING "READ AT THE BEGINNING OF REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS" WITH "ADDED TO THE CITY'S HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS AND DISPLAYED IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS" AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Marney, Gibson

NAYS: Therrien, Rogers, Clark

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared the MOTION FAILED.

**Ms. Therrien** stated that she would volunteer to read the land acknowledgement at each meeting instead of the Clerk.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 4981 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Rogers, Therrien

NAYS: Clark, Gibson, Marney, Cleworth

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared Resolution No. 4981 FAILED.

- b) Resolution No. 5006 – A Resolution Supporting the Development of a Trail Connecting Birch Hill Recreation Area to the Creamers Field Trails System to Include a Steese Expressway Trail Underpass. Introduced by Mayor Matherly. POSTPONED from the Regular Meeting of February 28, 2022

*The motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 5006 was made by Mr. Gibson and seconded by Mr. Marney at the February 28, 2022 Regular Meeting and remained on the floor. Ms. Therrien had previously abstained from voting on this matter due to a conflict of interest.*

**Mr. Marney** asked if FNSB Mayor Ward would be speaking about Resolution No. 5006; it was confirmed that Mayor Ward was not in attendance.

**Mr. Gibson** spoke in favor of the project, noting that it would likely take many years to accomplish. He stated he felt that linking Birch Hill and Creamers Field through a multi-trail system presented a lot of great opportunities.

City Engineer Bob Pristash provided a staff report, adding that the FNSB had met with former Chief of Staff Mike Meeks with a request for support of the project. He noted that the project had been supported by the FAST Planning Technical Committee and would be moving on to the FAST Planning Policy Board. He noted also that the FNSB Assembly had offered its support for the trail system project the previous year. He expressed a concern over maintenance responsibilities for the portion of the path that would in the City's right-of-way.

**Mr. Clark** asked about the reality of having a tunnel under the highway that would not be flooded every spring. CE Pristash stated that there could be issues based on elevation but noted that Anchorage has installed some of them successfully.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** stated that the highway is at a much higher elevation than the one Mr. Clark mentioned and would not likely present issues with flooding. He went on to ask about the multi-use trail and ski trail at the base of Birch Hill, asking if it was on military property. CE Pristash stated that the planning document does show that, but it is not the final draft; he stated that portion is still being worked out.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** stated that the trails in the south that lead north appear to be in the direction of the City's snow storage site and asked if the trails would impact the City's residential development potential. CE Pristash stated that they would not.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** asked how CE Pristash would address the maintenance issue. CE Pristash stated that he would not like to see the City become responsible for maintenance, especially given that a very small portion of the trail system falls on City property. He stated that



the City has previously permitted its right-of-way, making the permittee responsible for all maintenance. He noted that the decision for maintenance did not have to be made with Resolution No. 5006, adding that there would be opportunity as the project progressed to do so. CE Pristash recommended that the City pass the resolution of support but refrain from noting the maintenance issues; he stated those items could be addressed later.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 5006 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Gibson, Cleworth, Marney, Rogers

NAYS: Clark

ABSTAIN: Therrien

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 5009 APPROVED.

- c) Ordinance No. 6198 – An Ordinance Ratifying a Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Fairbanks and the Public Safety Employee Association. Introduced by Mayor Matherly. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

**Mr. Clark**, seconded by **Mr. Gibson**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6198.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for public testimony.

Andrew Wixon, FPD – A. Wixon stated that he served as FPEA Union President and expressed his thanks to all those involved in the successful negotiations; he thanked the City Council Members for their consideration.

Hearing no more requests for comment, **Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared Public Testimony closed.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** asked City Attorney Paul Ewers where he could find the Janus language and asked if was clear enough or if it needed to be more specific. CA Ewers stated that while it was not spelled out specifically, he was satisfied with the language listed in sections 5.1 and 7.1. Police Chief Dupee clarified that they had used the same language provided by the Public Safety Employee Association (PSEA) during the previous contract negotiations.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** noted that section 10.10.1.1 does not allow for anyone who is outside of the PSEA to fill the roles of Acting Deputy Chief, Captain, or Lieutenant, and he asked for clarification about employees who choose not to join the PSEA. Chief Dupee stated that even if they are not paying members of the PSEA, employees are still represented by the PSEA based on their employment

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** asked about the removal of the section addressing funeral leave. Human Resources Director Angela Foster-Snow stated that the funeral leave had been replaced with the implementation of the City's family leave and funeral leave ordinance. CA Ewers stated that the section may be reserved in the document so that other sections do not have to be renumbered.

**Mr. Clark** asked for an explanation of the dates listed in section 9.2.1. Chief Dupee stated that the dates remain the same as the previous contract, and the financial obligation also remains at \$1,550.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** shared his appreciation of the negotiation process, noting that it was a very enjoyable experience. He complimented the Council for determining funding sources prior to negotiating, adding that it is important to know what the City has to offer prior to making obligations.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6198 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Cleworth, Gibson, Rogers, Therrien, Clark, Marney

NAYS: None

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6198 ADOPTED.

- d) Ordinance No. 6199 – An Ordinance Amending the 2022 Operating and Capital Budgets for the First Time. Introduced by Mayor Matherly. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

**Ms. Therrien**, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6199.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for testimony and, hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

**Ms. Therrien**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to AMEND Ordinance No. 6199 by substituting the amended, proposed version of Ordinance No. 6199.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 6199 BY SUBSTITUTING THE AMENDED, PROPOSED VERSION OF ORDINANCE NO. 6199 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Therrien, Marney, Rogers, Gibson, Cleworth, Clark

NAYS: None

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared the MOTION CARRIED.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6199, AS AMENDED, AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Clark, Cleworth, Gibson, Marney, Rogers, Therrien

NAYS: None

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6199, as Amended, ADOPTED.

- e) Ordinance No. 6200 – An Ordinance Granting a Tax Exemption for Privately Owned Real Property Used as a Charter School. Introduced by Council Member Gibson. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

**Mr. Gibson**, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6200.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for testimony and, hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

**Mr. Marney** asked Chief Financial Officer Margarita Bell if the fiscal note provided included all the charter schools in the City, and CFO Bell confirmed that it did.

**Mr. Marney** asked if there could be additional schools added. CFO Bell stated that there could be more, but she was only able to identify the three listed.

**Mr. Gibson** asked about the third school listed, stating that he was only aware of the Chinook and Boreal Sun charter schools in the City. CFO Bell stated that she would have to retrieve her notes.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** asked Mr. Gibson for clarification on the exemption, asking whether homeschools and other programs would be included. **Mr. Gibson** stated that it would apply only to charter schools specifically. He stated he drafted the ordinance based on a similar one with the FNSB, which had been modeled after the State legislation that gave municipalities the ability to grant the exemptions. He went on to state that there were currently schools operating as non-profits that received a similar tax exemption. **Mr. Gibson** stated that these schools spend upwards of \$300,000 per year leasing facilities, adding that there are at least two district schools soon to be closed. He noted that the Council should carefully consider offering an exemption while other schools are currently being shut down.

**Mr. Clark** asked Mr. Gibson if he had considered the other types of schools. **Mr. Gibson** stated that he went with what had been offered by the FNSB and the State of Alaska.

**Mr. Clark** asked Mr. Gibson if he felt that more Charter schools might come into the City. **Mr. Gibson** stated that it was a possibility.

**Ms. Therrien** asked if most charter schools were non-profit organizations by nature. **Mr. Gibson** confirmed that they are, but they do not typically own the property they use. He added that they have been allocated funds and are under contract with the local school district.

**Ms. Therrien** stated that she understood that charter schools were cheaper to operate than district schools and typically brought additional funds upwards of \$1M into the school district. **Mr. Gibson** stated that if only the actual budgets of schools are considered, charter schools are more expensive to run and maintain than a FNSB school.

**Ms. Rogers** asked if the school closure discussion had started when Mr. Gibson began drafting the ordinance. **Mr. Gibson** shared that he had researched the operational costs of Joy Elementary School after learning that it had been scheduled for closure, which was less than what the charter schools are spending.

CFO Bell shared that she was able to identify three charter schools within the City: Chinook Montessori Charter, Boreal Sun Charter, and Spruce Tree Montessori.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** shared that the FNSB has often offered tax exemptions that the City has rarely, if ever, piggybacked on. He added that the City is limited by a tax cap within a cap. He stated that the school district budgets appropriately when they lease buildings from the private sector, knowing that it will cost the charter school. He went on to state that a tax break provided to charter schools essentially allows the for the FNSB School District to retain more funds. **Mayor pro tem Cleworth** added that the exemption should treat all schools the same and that by offering an exemption to one type of school, it would leave administrators of other programs asking for exemptions as well. He noted that the City would soon be asked to offer an exemption for new developments, and until the cap within the cap is addressed, there would not be any way to replace lost funds. He expressed his appreciation to Mr. Gibson for bringing the discussion to the Council.

**Ms. Therrien** asked if the \$24,580 noted in the fiscal note covered all three schools; CFO Bell confirmed that it did.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6200 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Gibson, Therrien

NAYS: Cleworth, Marney, Clark, Rogers

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared Ordinance No. 6200 FAILED.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Resolution No. 5008 – A Resolution Urging the United States of America, State of Alaska, and European Union Stakeholders to Work Together to Facilitate the Development of Alaska’s Natural Gas for Export to Democratic European Nations to Reduce Their Dependence on Russian Natural Gas. Introduced by Council Member Gibson.

PASSED and APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

- b) Ordinance No. No. 6201 – An Ordinance to Amend FGC Sec. 2-86 Setting Council Member Compensation. Introduced by Council Member Therrien.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

- a) Chena Riverfront Commission Meeting Minutes of December 22, 2021

ACCEPTED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

## COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

### a) Committee Reports

**Mr. Gibson** stated he had no comments.

**Ms. Rogers** shared her appreciation for the FPD and Dispatch employees in attendance.

**Mr. Marney** thanked the FPD and Dispatch employees, adding that it had been a pleasure to participate in the contract negotiations.

**Ms. Therrien** gave a land acknowledgment and provided an update on the City Legislative meeting from March 9. She noted that City Lobbyist Yuri Morgan predicted that the legislative session would not adjourn until mid-May. She reported that the recapitalization of community assistance did not make the cut and that the City would not be receiving the \$500,000 that would have come from it. She added that there has been a lot of Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC) campaign legislation and asked if the City had sent a letter regarding HB 307 and the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) bonding authority. Chief of Staff Mike Sanders confirmed that the letter had been sent.

**Mr. Clark** shared that a new bill, HB 220, would make all state employees eligible for defined benefits and that the new bill is having a negative impact on HB 55. He added that a hardship stipend was being discussed by the legislature, which would provide an additional \$1,300 on top of the permanent fund dividend (PFD) distribution to help Alaskans with the rising costs of fuel. He pointed out that the funds would come from the General Fund and not the PFD reserves. **Mr. Clark** noted that the price of fuel is becoming a very big issue and that the leaders in Washington D.C. do not seem interested in lowering prices. He added that more Alaska-friendly leaders need to be voted into office.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** thanked Mr. Gibson for introducing Resolution No. 5008. He asked that the work session regarding the Fairbanks Fire Department (FFD) be held in April – the sooner, the better. He congratulated the University of Alaska (UAF) men's basketball team on their remarkable recent success. He requested an excused absence for the Regular City Council meeting of March 28, 2022, as he would be travelling.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for an objection to his request to be excused from the Regular City Council meeting on March 28, 2022; there were no objections.

## CITY CLERK'S REPORT

City Clerk Snider reported that the Downtown Plan Work Session would be held on April 11, with the FFD Work Session scheduled for April 25.

**Mr. Clark**, seconded by **Mr. Marney**, moved to ENTER Executive Session to discuss AMLJIA/City – Roberts v. City Post-Arbitration (coverage) Settlement Negotiations.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for objection and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for a brief recess. The Council reconvened in Executive Session following the brief recess.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

a) AMLJIA/City – Roberts v. City Post-Arbitration (coverage) Settlement Negotiations

The City Council met in Executive Session to discuss AMLJIA/City – Roberts v. City Post-Arbitration (coverage) Settlement Negotiations. Direction was given to the City Attorney, and no action was taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Ms. Therrien**, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** called for objection and, hearing none, so ORDERED.


**Mayor pro tem Cleworth** declared the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.



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JIM MATHERLY, MAYOR

ATTEST:



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D. DANYELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: RR