



CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

Saturday, March 05, 2022 at 9:00 AM

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Dillingham City Council was held on Saturday, March 5, 2022, at the Dillingham City Council Chambers and via video conferencing, in Dillingham, Alaska. Mayor Ruby called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Ruby was present.

Council members present and establishing a quorum (a quorum being four):

Aksel Buholm	Curt Armstrong	Chris Napoli
Perry Abrams	Kaleb Westfall	Michael Bennett

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION to approve the agenda made by Perry Abrams, seconded by Chris Napoli.

VOTING Yea: Council Member Napoli, Council Member Armstrong, Council Member Abrams, Council Member Buholm, Council Member Westfall, Council Member Bennett

CITIZEN'S DISCUSSION (Prior Notice or Agenda Items)

Richard O'Connor: Spoke in opposition of the fish tax ordinance. Stating more work/research should be done.

SPECIAL BUSINESS

1. Adopt **Resolution 2022-07**; A Resolution of the Dillingham City Council Amending the Bank Signature Card and Investment Signature Authority Forms Due to a Change in City Staff

MOTION to adopt Resolution 2022-07 made by Kaleb Westfall, seconded by Perry Abrams.

VOTING Yea: Council Member Napoli, Council Member Armstrong, Council Member Abrams, Council Member Buholm, Council Member Westfall, Council Member Bennett

2. Adopt **Resolution 2022-08**; A Resolution of the Dillingham City Council Approving a FY2023 Capital Improvement Plan and the FY2023 Legislative Priorities List

MOTION to adopt Resolution 2022-08 made by Kaleb Westfall, seconded by Michael Bennett.

VOTING Yea: Council Member Napoli, Council Member Armstrong, Council Member Abrams, Council Member Buholm, Council Member Westfall, Council Member Bennett

3. Introduce **Ordinance 2022-03**; An Ordinance of the Dillingham City Council Amending Title 4 of the Dillingham Municipal Code to Adopt an Excise Tax on Importation of Marijuana

MOTION to introduce Ordinance 2022-03 made by Chris Napoli, seconded by Kaleb Westfall.

- City currently receives taxation at 6%
- Local business owners recommended city increase the tax rate.

- Both local establishments were contacted.

VOTING Yea: Council Member Napoli, Council Member Armstrong, Council Member Abrams, Council Member Buholm, Council Member Westfall, Council Member Bennett

4. Introduce **Ordinance 2022-04**; An Ordinance of the Dillingham City Council Amending Title 4 of the Dillingham Municipal Code Levying an Excise Tax on Seafood Products Imported for Processing in Dillingham

MOTION to Introduce Ordinance 2022-04 made by Aksel Buholm, seconded by Kaleb Westfall.

- Finance & Budget Committee forwarded to council.
- Desire is to adopt something similar to the Bristol Bay Borough processing tax.
- Proposes an excise tax per pound of product processed rather than a percentage of the price paid by the processor.

MOTION to refer Ordinance 2022-04 back to the Finance & Budget committee made by Perry Abrams, seconded by Aksel Buholm.

- Need to get processors and community more involved.
- Need to educate processors and community about need for revenue
- City of Dillingham financial situation warrants the need to do something.
- Difficult to obtain data on actual poundage processed within city limits, anecdotal reports are that Peter Pan processed 22 million pounds of fish in 2021.
- Don't want to drive business away.

VOTING Yea: Council Member Armstrong, Council Member Abrams, Council Member Buholm, Council Member Westfall, Council Member Bennett

VOTING No: Council Member Napoli

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Curt Armstrong:

- Expressed disappointment in those who have shown blatant disregard for the E.O. in place and those who worked hard to put it in place.
- Noted that council members who chose to stay for the March 3rd meeting, listened in a workshop format to hear from the citizens who came in person and who attended by zoom.
- Commented the notion of we the people and transparency were not adhered to at the March 3rd meeting.

Aksel Buholm:

- Noted the need to update status of Public Safety job description wording to allow for flexibility in filling positions.
- Requested legal description of all city real property.

MOTION to request staff prepare a list of all city raw and vacant property owned by the City of Dillingham including 14c designated land made by Aksel Buholm, seconded by Chris Napoli.

VOTING Yea: Council Member Napoli, Council Member Armstrong, Council Member Abrams, Council Member Buholm, Council Member Westfall, Council Member Bennett

- The request for a special meeting was made while the City Clerk was on leave. The Mayor and Finance Director were both serving as jurors. PTO was sacrificed to get the meeting together.

MOTION that Lori Goodell get three days added back to her PTO time and it comes out of the council budget made by Aksel Buholm, seconded by Kaleb Westfall.

VOTING Yea: Council Member Napoli, Council Member Armstrong, Council Member Abrams, Council Member Buholm, Council Member Westfall, Council Member Bennett

- Stated there were times as a council member he did not want to hear or do something, but he did listen and did his job. Noted many citizens have approached him regarding what happened at the March 3rd meeting. Commented the meeting was shut down, the voice was taken away from the people (one of the first things a communist does) rather than standing up for freedom. Conveyed disappointment in what happened, stated all have egg on our faces. Affirmed he takes being a council member serious, noting the processes available for council to give direction. Noting what happened was not right and nothing was accomplished.

Chris Napoli:

- Thanked Bill Dann, Chris Hladick, and staff for making the strategic planning session happen.
- Noted the diverse group and recognized that first and foremost this job is done for citizen of Dillingham and being committed to the community. Stated it is a thankless job done without any financial reward.
- Noted appreciated for all who came in on the weekend and gave time and effort.
- Echoed Aksel Buholm's comments. Adding the importance to realize the legal obligation to attend meetings and not walk out.

Perry Abrams:

- Stated he is dedicated to the job 110%.
- Conveyed frustration regarding COVID and the restrictions imposed over the last two years.
- Acknowledged the need to get past COVID restrictions and onto issues the city really needs to address.
- Apologized, stating there was not an intent to embarrass anyone.
- Noted the responsibilities of being a Council Member started to change him, and he felt like he needed to get back in control.
- Stated he was passionate for the COVID items to not pass. Commented that he recognizes differing positions of other members.
- Commented it wounded him to not attend the last meeting. Noting it was one of the hardest things he has done in many years. Stated he is reenergized / rededicated to the Council and the City of Dillingham, and wants what is best for the people.

Michael Bennett:

- Agreed with Perry's comments.
- Thanked staff, Bill, Chris, Robert and Alice. Noting all donate time to try and better the future of Dillingham.
- Noted the need for Council to come together, find solutions, and common ground.

Kaleb Westfall:

- Noted the amazing work being done during strategic planning sessions.
- Stated he wants what is best for the people of Dillingham. Council needs to find goals that all people can benefit from, not an agenda from either side of the isle or specific ideologies.
- Looking back at the last few years: several petitions were submitted with approximately 200 signatures concerning not passing Communist legislation, or legislation that takes Americans right to choose away.
- The Oath taken by Council Members is to uphold the United States Constitution, and State of Alaska Constitution, and that is how decisions should be made, not on emotions, but rather doing the peoples will.
- Expressed a desire to reach across to each other and discuss what worked, and what did not work.

- Stated it was disingenuous to the people; the Feb 10th meeting talked about repealing E.O.'s and COVID legislation. The next agenda had the exact opposite. Noted receiving many comments from the public wanting clarification regarding what was going on.
- Commented that our future is our children, and COVID restrictions have set them back.
- Noted the importance of open discussion, having a difference of opinion, and still work in good faith to find what is best for the community. He did not believe that happened last week.
- Reported that to date, no one on Council has contacted him to see why he left the March 3rd meeting. Stated no one has reached out to him to ascertain if we should continue COVID rules, or have it on the agenda.
- Stated he is on the record of being in favor of transparency, and moving forward together to do peoples work.
- Maintains we can have a difference of opinion, and still respect all council members. Stated a quorum didn't happen because he did not believe he could have that conversation. It wouldn't have been genuine, and the peoples will would not have been done. Stated he did not believe the March 3rd agenda was the Council or the peoples will.
- Apologized to everybody who felt disrespected. Noting that was not the intent, and is sorry some felt that way. The intention was to do the peoples will and give everyone their own choice to protect themselves how they see fit.
- Expressed government should not be involved in personal health issues.
- Commented we should remember we are doing the peoples work.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

- Thanked Interim City Manager Mark Lynch for doing his best; noting a good job was done.
- Welcomed Robert Mawson as the new City Manager.
- Commented the March 3rd meeting was shameful, noting twenty-two people attended electronically, and six to seven attended in person and all expected the council to make decisions or intended to speak to the council.
- Noted it was interesting to hear Mr. Westfall talk about testimony from the March 3rd meeting/workshop though he was not present to hear. Stated many citizens have commented that the council has a responsibility to attend meetings whether pro or con on the agenda issues.
- The expectation was the council would take action as a group, legal advice and advice from medical partners had been obtained regarding COVID.
- Some in attendance at the March 3rd meeting wanted to talk to council about other agenda items; i.e. OBI. A council goal is to create partnerships; how can we expect partnerships be created with a council that is not stable?
- Prior to the March 3rd meeting every council member was called. Communication about the agenda was relayed and Council Members were informed about the items and why they were going to be on it. Every member had an opportunity to request a different approach. The agenda was structured to give council the full spectrum of options; take no action, extend current method in place, or change to a position of of recommendations. It was designed for council to take a leadership role in determining the City's COVID response.
- Stated looks forward to looking forward, and working together as a team.
- Stated that it is recognized that all council members have responsibilities outside of their role as council members. Meetings are set for specific dates so all members will be able to structure their personal calendar to participate. Meetings happening with short notice can be difficult or make it impossible for all to be in attendance.
- Noted she has been the Mayor for a long time and the City of Dillingham has made a lot of progress.
- Reminder a Joint School Board / City Council meeting is scheduled for March 24th.
- A moment of silence was observed for all those lost since the last meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Ruby adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.

Mayor Alice Ruby
[SEAL]

ATTEST:

Lori Goodell, City Clerk

Approval Date: _____