

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cottle called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the City Council Chambers

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Bert Cottle  
Council member Dave Cobb  
Council member Joe Prax  
Council member Karen Ables

Council member Dorothy Moore  
Council member Mike Wells  
Council member Steve McCann

Also Present:

Eric Philips, Acting City Manager  
Sheri Pierce, City Clerk

Also Present: Members of staff and approximately 15 people in the audience.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF September 7, 2010

The minutes of the meeting of September 7, 2010 were approved with one minor correction.

V. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

1. Providence Valdez Medical Center Update – Sean McCallister

Mr. Sean McCallister, Administrator of Providence Medical Center, gave a presentation to the Council on the current status of the Valdez Medical Center. Mr. McCallister specifically reported on the status of the 2010 capital projects and the 2011 capital needs. For the status of the 2010 capital projects he reported that at the beginning of the summer the Council was approached with a capital request to remodel the dining area in the long term care facility which would have cost about \$85,000. They decided to use that money for a more pertinent need by purchasing a fluoroscope device. Mr. McCallister explained that the decision

was influenced by the plans that are currently in progress for health care expansion which would include expanding the long term care facility which would take care of the needs of the dining area. Mr. McCallister stated that they would like to see how the plans for the expansion projects pan out before putting any money into remodeling the dining area. Mr. McCallister explained the reasoning behind the purchase of the fluoroscope largely centered on the recently hired anesthesiologist, Dr. Dale Griffin. Dr. Griffin has the capability to provide pain management services which requires a fluoroscope. This is an addition to medical treatment options and is a great benefit for Valdez residents.

Mr. McCallister then announced that they are looking to bring a number of new specialty services on line to the community. He pointed out the existing services and stated that in the next 6-12 months they are looking to double the number of specialty services they offer. New services they plan to provide include general anesthesia, epidurals, pain management, ear nose and throat procedures, podiatry, neuropsychology, sleep disorder studies and barium swallow studies.

Mr. McCallister stated that in 2011 their capital needs will be at about 1 million dollars. He explained that the most expensive piece of equipment needed is a new CT scanner priced at approximately \$725,000. Mr. McCallister said that the current CT scanner was purchased when the hospital was built. Prior to that time, this community did not have a CT scanner. It has been very valuable for Valdez. Mr. McCallister stated that they bought a refurbished machine and it has now passed its useful life. He stated that they had hoped to replace it in the next few years but because it has been performing poorly it will need to be replaced sooner. Mr. McCallister also mentioned other capital needs including a telemetry/cardiac monitoring system that will cost \$150,000, ICU Remote Monitoring Support system for \$50,000, and a new ultrasound machine for \$35,000. Mr. McCallister explained that the lease for the current ultrasound machine is up and because the machine is state of the art and has several working years left on it, they would like to now purchase it at fair market value. If they decided to lease another machine it would cost the same amount as purchasing the current one so the decision was made to buy the machine they have now. Finally, Mr. McCallister reported that the counseling center had been furnished with furniture that came from the old hospital. It was not replaced or refurbished when the new hospital was constructed so at this time it would be a good idea to have it replaced. It is estimated that it will cost about \$40,000.

Council member Wells asked Mr. McCallister what the expected life span on the ultra sound machine was. Mr. McCallister responded that it would have at least five years at the end of the lease but that it was expected to go beyond that. Council member Prax asked about the CT scanner and the expected life on that. It was reported that a new CT scanner would be expected to last seven years or

more. Council member McCann asked if another refurbished unit would be purchased. Mr. McCallister responded in the negative based on lessons learned from buying a refurbished CT unit in the past. He stated that it is far more cost effective to buy a new machine rather than deal with issues and cost that arise with a refurbished one. Council member Moore asked if the original CT scanner had been purchased with a grant from the Denali Commission. Mr. McCallister stated that at that time the Denali Commission funded the entire project however over the years the Denali Commission has had less funds to work with. He stated that last year they told all hospitals in the state to not ask for anything exceeding \$100,000.

Council member McCann asked for further explanation on the Remote Monitoring system. He asked if someone from Anchorage would be monitoring our patients. Mr. McCallister responded in the affirmative stating that monitoring from Anchorage is a portion of the plan for intensive care patients. Anchorage has a specialist position that is a highly trained intensive care physician that monitors all intensive care patients currently in Anchorage. Now, they are expanding that monitoring throughout the state. Essentially the doctors here would be able to turn over a patient to the specialist in Anchorage but more often than not it is a partnership between both locations. This is new to the state of Alaska and is the only system of its kind in the state but it is becoming main stream in the lower 48. Mr. McCallister explained that there is a capital cost to install the equipment and then there would be an operational cost on an annual basis of approximately \$40,000 per year. Council member Moore asked if the hospital takes care of contracting the Valdez doctors in the intensive care unit. Mr. McCallister replied in the affirmative.

Mayor Cottle asked if the system would be fiber or wireless. Mr. McCallister replied that it would be fiber. Mayor Cottle also asked if any items had sensitive timelines. Mr. McCallister stated that most purchases would require 90 days to procure. So, they intend to pay for those in 2011 but would begin the purchase process immediately so that they would actually receive the equipment in the first quarter of next year.

Council member Moore asked Mr. McCallister to clarify if this was simply a verbal request that would not be acted on until after the upcoming budget sessions were completed and the requests were approved. Mr. McCallister stated that they would wait for the full budget process to take place.

Mr. McCallister gave a report on the financial status of the hospital stating that they are doing very well at this time. He illustrated that by explaining how they calculate their financial sustainability which is defined by the amount of cash they have in the bank. It equates to days of cash on hand. They estimate that it costs

about \$30,000 per day to operate the hospital. They currently have a little over \$5 million in the bank which yields 167 days of cash on hand. He explained that the industry standard and Providence standard is 150 days. So, they are more than meeting the standard. He explained that they would never want to fall below 90 days, cash on hand and that 120 days is the upper threshold. Mr. McCallister stated that they are currently in a position to pay for many of the capital needs for 2011 which will in turn be less of a burden on the City. He stated that in 2010 they had a slow start to the year financially and then summer really picked up in July and they have been able to increase their reserves at a higher rate than in previous years. Based on those facts, Mr. McCallister reported what they would be asking for from the City. He indicated that they would ask for no operating supplement for 2011. Last year they asked for about \$300,000. They would like to now shift that amount over to a capital request. He felt confident that they would not need assistance with an operating supplement next year. He felt that this was a great indicator to the community of the hospital's sustainability. Mr. McCallister stated that this would exclude the counseling center which is in need of some subsidies. They are currently run on state funding for the most part. They are seeing an increase of clients this year and will need an additional \$160,000 for the upcoming year which is up \$60,000 from 2010.

Mr. McCallister concluded that they would be requesting that the city contribute \$400,000 in capital to go towards the million dollars needed for the capital needs he described. The hospital could use \$600,000 of its cash reserves to pay for some of the capital needs. This would still leave them with 147 days of cash on hand which is still a very good position to be in.

Council member Prax asked for clarification on what was given last year. Mr. McCallister explained the requests in detail and provided the following information:

	2010	2011	Difference
Capital	\$177,648	\$400,000	\$282,352
Management Fee	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$0
Hospital Supplement	\$346,789	\$0	-\$346,789
PVCC Supplement	\$207,326	\$260,240	\$52,914
Maintenance	\$250,000	\$260,000	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$1,121,763	\$1,120,240	-\$1,523

Council member Moore asked how many total full time employees does the hospital employ. Mr. McCallister responded that there are approximately 80 full time employees. She asked how many full time employees there were before the new hospital was constructed. Mr. McCallister stated that it was about half of the

number we now have. Council member Moore pointed out that by building the new hospital we have added 40 new full time jobs to this community. Mr. McCallister stated that yes; the new hospital has been a major economic driver for the community.

Council member Prax said that he did not want the point to be lost that the hospital was asking for less operating money. That is a rarity. Even though the money would be used for capital it should be recognized that the costs to the city continue to decrease. Council member Prax expressed his appreciation to Mr. McCallister and his staff for effectively managing the hospital's money.

Mr. McCallister stated that it has always been their goal to take the operating supplement to zero. He explained that they are doing it more quickly than expected and stated that this is an experiment to see how they do next year. He said that it does not make sense to make a profit and continue to ask for operating supplements. He indicated that he believed that this was the responsible thing to do for the good of the community.

Mr. McCallister closed by stating that it is their goal to make healthcare in Valdez the best it can be by finding the balance between financial sustainability and responsible growth while providing newer and better quality services.

#### VI. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Jack McCay, Capital Facilities Director, introduced Jerry O'Brian as the new Project Manager and his wife Bertha. Mr. McCay explained that though they recently relocated from Arizona that Mr. O'Brian is actually from Valdez originally and was raised in Cordova. The Council welcomed Mr. O'Brian and his family back to Valdez.

#### VII. CITY MANAGER/CITY CLERK/CITY ATTORNEY/MAYOR REPORTS

##### CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Eric Phillips, Acting City Manager, stated that in Mr. Hozey's absence that there was no written City Manager's report but that he would be happy to answer any questions regarding on-going projects.

Council member Cobb asked for an update on the Forest Service building at Crooked Creek. Mr. Phillips directed the question to Jack McCay, Capital Facilities Director. Mr. McCay stated that the City received a \$493,000 grant from the Department of Agriculture for the construction of a Forest Service Building. Mr. McCay reported that Harris Sand and Gravel was awarded the project and

that excavation had begun and that the old building had been removed. Mayor Cottle asked for the estimated completion date. Mr. McCay responded that the project had to be completed by December 10, 2010 in order to receive the funding. Mr. McCay stated that the log structure was being built in Sterling, Alaska and that it would be transported to Valdez. It is being built with three sided logs so that the interior will have flat walls where displays may be hung. Mr. McCay stated that an ADA path will be paved and installed by the following week.

Council member Prax stated that he noticed that there were still package treatment plants located at the baler. Lisa Von Bargaen, Community Development Director, said that there are indeed three units out there that were ordered because residents had signed up agreeing to participate in the program but decided after they were ordered that they did not want to participate. The City did not force them into the program but have made the systems available to the residents who are completing the owner managed installations. To her knowledge, there are at least two people that are interested in them. Ms. Von Bargaen stated that they should be moved from the baler area in the very near future.

Council member Prax asked for an update on the current status of Alpine Woods. Ms. Von Bargaen stated that she had received an update from Allen Minish, the City contracted Engineer, on how things were wrapping up. Ms. Von Bargaen said she would be happy to provide that report to Council.

#### CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Sheri Pierce, City Clerk, reported that absentee voting began that day, September 20<sup>th</sup> and will continue until October 4<sup>th</sup>, the day before the election. The hours at City Hall are 8:30 am – 5:00 pm. Ms. Pierce stated that if there are people who have difficulty getting to City Hall to vote within those hours that they may call the Clerk's office and make other arrangements. She asked that those interested call her office at 834-3408 or City Hall at 835-4313. Ms. Pierce stated that the Clerk's office would also be doing assisted voting like they did for the State Primary Election for people at the Senior Center or anyone that is in long term care.

Ms. Pierce stated that there is a Public Hearing scheduled for the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September at 7:00 pm for a Planning and Zoning issue. It is a public hearing for Block 9, Lot 11, Robe River Subdivision. It is a back yard setback encroachment and the owner of that property is Steve McCann.

Ms. Pierce also reported that there will be a public meeting scheduled for September 29<sup>th</sup> on the Testing and Training Platform. It will be held from 6:30 –

8:30 pm in the city council chambers. The Community Development Department will be hosting the meeting and Lisa Von Bargen, Community Development Director, will be the contact.

Council member Ables asked if a "Meet the Candidates Night" would be held. Ms. Pierce stated that the Clerk's office is not involved with those efforts in any way because the Clerk's office must remain separated from what may be construed as promotion of selected candidates. She stated that in the past the Rotary Club had organized these events however at this time the Rotary is not meeting. She stated that she had not heard of any other efforts in that regard. Ms. Von Bargen stated that it is very unfortunate that there is not an organization unrelated to the City that can provide this opportunity for the public.

#### CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mayor Cottle stated that there would be no report because two of the City attorneys were in Seattle taking depositions. Mayor Cottle indicated that Joe Levesque was available via telephone if needed.

#### MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Cottle reported that he had spent the weekend in Talkeetna with Governor Hickle's group attending the annual Institute of the North. He stated that recent events over the last 2-3 years have led to changes in the rules and regulations of APOC in regards to some Boards and Commissions. Specifically, those individuals serving on Boards and Commissions that have budgets are now required to complete a fourteen page report to be a member including the disclosure of all financial information as well as the locations of all family members, etc. The City of Valdez opted out of following these APOC guidelines back in the 1970s. Therefore, it does not pertain to us however other cities and boroughs are now trying to figure out now to opt out as well. Mayor Cottle stated that for many municipalities it is becoming very difficult to find people willing to serve in these positions now that this information must be disclosed.

Council member Prax asked if there would be more of a report on the Institute of the North. Mayor Cottle replied in the affirmative stating that there were reports that he would provide. He also stated that this would be the last year that he would be attending on behalf of the City and it would be beneficial if someone else could take on that roll in his absence.

Mayor Cottle also reported that on October 4<sup>th</sup> he had been asked on behalf of the Alaska Municipal League to be present at a meeting in Anchorage regarding funding that is available for the emergency police line, 9-1-1. He reported that

there are some areas in Alaska that do not have this service and others that are dispatching phone calls through other city's police departments. There are several issues surrounding this. Mayor Cottle stated that he has been asked by AML to attend and voice his concerns. He said that he had met with Chief Comer to get his feedback and was prepared to do this on behalf of the City of Valdez. Mayor Cottle indicated that he would be back for the council meeting that evening.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Transfer of Liquor License: Fu Kung

MOTION: Council member Cobb moved, seconded by Council member Moore, to approve the Consent Agenda.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 7 yeas, Motion carried.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Professional Services Agreement with Hawk Consultants in an Amount not to Exceed \$42,000 for Project Management and Inspection Services

MOTION: Council member Cobb moved, seconded by Council member Ables, to approve a professional services agreement with Hawk Consultants for project management and inspection services in an amount not to exceed \$42,000.

Council member Moore asked for clarification on what was spent out of the budgeted amount. It was her understanding that \$35,000 was spent previously and now with this addition, \$42,000 would be added to that totaling \$77,000. This would leave an approximate balance of \$23,000. Mr. Phillips replied in the affirmative. Council member Prax asked who the firm was. Mr. Phillips explained that it is an Anchorage firm that provides construction management services. Mr. Phillips stated that the city contracted with them to provide us with two project managers/inspectors to get us through the summer months after we lost the City Engineer. Mr. Phillips explained that this amount would carry through to complete the 2010 projects. Mayor Cottle asked what projects they are currently working on and if this money would be spent in the 2010 calendar year. Jack McCay, Capital Facilities Director replied in the affirmative and stated that currently they are handling the Small Boat Harbor, H&K Tour Dock

Electrical, Kelsey Dock Uplands Phase II Electrical, Kelsey Dock Mooring, Kelsey Dock Rehabilitation, Civic Center Fittings and Unions Project, Small Boat Harbor High Mast Lighting, and the Valdez Container Terminal High Mast Lighting. There are a couple of projects they are in the process of handing over to Mr. O'Brien, the new Project Manager. The contracted employees will both be finished by the end of October and will not be used again for the remainder of this year.

Council member Moore asked if they were versed in our city's requirements for building that might differ from other places. Mr. McCay stated that they were properly trained to uphold our standards. Council member Ables asked if the most important thing was their Engineering stamp. Mr. McCay replied in the negative. He stated that the projects they are working on have already been designed and that our needs lie in having enough people to monitor the building process.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 7 yeas. Motion carried.

X. RESOLUTIONS

1. #10-51 – Appointing the Judges and Clerks for the Regular Municipal Election to be Held October 5, 2010 and Setting the Hourly Rate of Compensation

MOTION: Council member Wells moved, seconded by Council member Ables, to approve Resolution No. 10-51.

VOTE ON MOTION: 7 yeas. Motion carried.

2. #10-52 – Amending the 2010 City Budget in the Debt Service Fund and the General Fund by Transferring \$600,000 to the Law Department Budget and Authorizing its Expenditure

MOTION: Council member Cobb moved, seconded by Council member Ables, to approve Resolution No. 10 – 52.

Mayor Cottle stated that since there were no attorneys present that it might be a good idea to postpone this resolution until there is an attorney present to answer questions.

MOTION TO POSTPONE: Council member Cobb moved, seconded by Council member Wells, to postpone the resolution until there was an attorney present to answer questions as well as the City Manger.

VOTE ON MOTION: 7 yeas. Motion carried.

3. #10-53 – Amending the 2010 City Budget in the General Fund and the Capital Facilities Fund by Transferring \$39,635 from the Teen Center Miscellaneous Supplies Account in the General Fund to the Sea Otter Area Restoration CIP in the Capital Facilities Fund and Authorizing its Expenditure

MOTION: Council member Cobb moved, seconded by Council member Moore, to approve Resolution no. 10-53.

Council member Wells asked if we were actually going to set up a separate CIP account for the money used for the old Sea Otter RV Park. Mr. Phillips replied in the affirmative and stated that it was not appropriate to have the money for the Sea Otter RV Park in the Teen Center account. In an effort to be more transparent and clear about both funds they would like to set it up in its own account.

Council member Prax asked where we were in deciding what to do with that land. Lisa Von Barga, Community Development Director, stated that they had not had a meeting since the City Council gave their recommendation at midyear for the use of the land. She said that they need to get the commissions back together and begin working on this project again. She stated that they were temporarily on hold due to other business that has taken precedence over this issue.

Council member Wells asked if what they were voting on that night was to create a CIP account for those funds and that the money would be used for reclamation of that land. Mr. Phillips responded that it had more to do with the demolition needs of the property. Electrical pedestals need to be removed along with a few other small projects. Mr. Phillips reported that this work needs to take place regardless of the long term plans for the land.

Council member Prax agreed with what was being proposed that evening however he stressed the importance of making sure the money is only used for things that need to be done to the property regardless of what the outcome is in deciding the future use of the land. Mr. Phillips assured Council member Prax that this would be the case. Mayor Cottle added that if the demolition was completed that the land could possibly be opened again to the public because it would be safer. Council member Prax stated that he was fine with fulfilling those needs but wanted to make sure that it

was not in conjunction with any particular use of the property. Council member Prax asked if City staff would be doing the demolition or was it being put out to bid. Larry Weaver, Public Works Director, stated that between now and the end of October that City crews would go out and pull all electrical pedestals and they would also dig down and place a valve and plate on the water line that goes across the street. Mr. Weaver said that the gate has been installed and jersey barriers are in place. Mayor Cottle asked if the jersey barriers would be removed for snow removal. Mr. Weaver replied in the negative stating they did not need to be removed for snow removal efforts. He said they could come in through the gate and use that as the push zone for snow removal needs.

Council member Moore stated her support for the moving the fund into an appropriate location and she encouraged Administration to look at other accounts in our budget to make sure everything is in the appropriate place so that all spending is completely traceable.

Council member McCann asked about the buildings on the land and if they were to be demolished as well. Mr. Weaver stated that he did not have any knowledge of that request at this time. Ms. Von Barga stated that the building demolition was on the list for the 2011 CIP budget. Council member McCann asked if there would be someone monitoring those buildings this winter and if they were in danger of collapse due to snow load. Ms. Von Barga stated that she believed they would be boarded up as they were last year. Mayor Cottle said that indeed they were boarded up last year and shoveled only one time.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 7 yeas, motion carried.

4. #10-54 – Naming Rates and Fees for Use of Facilities in the Valdez Small Boat Harbor and Repealing Resolution No. 09-54 Formerly Naming Such Rates and Fees

MOTION: Council member Cobb moved, seconded by Council member Ables, to approve Resolution No. 10-54.

Council member Cobb stated his concern about year around storage at the Uplands and the Fisherman's Dock indicating that the area is one that requires significant snow removal. He stated that he would hate to see any gear left in that general area that may be abandoned causing the City major problems. Diane Kinney, Ports and Harbor Director, stated that she agrees with Council member Cobb. They added language to their policies and procedures that would state that there would be a 9 month limit on

storage in that area. Council member Cobb agreed that this might eliminate abandonment issues in the area. Council member Cobb continued stating that he did not have a problem with the fees proposed for the Upland storage at the end of the spit but that he thought that all gear stored should be marked with the name of the owner as well as current contact information. This would help eliminate abandonment of items that people do not want and the liability to the City for its disposal. Ms. Kinney stated that they were exploring ways to tag gear for this purpose. Ms. Kinney said that property owners must come into the office to fill out proper paper work for storage and at that time a tag would be issued that must be attached to all items being stored. Ms. Kinney stated that the spaces at the end of the spit do have numbers and that area is the only one that will be utilized for storage needs. Ms. Kinney also stated that she is not having an over abundance of interest in storage at this time. She felt that the spaces which are currently numbered would be sufficient. Council member Cobb stated his concern about boat storage due to the history associated with people abandoning derelict vessels. Ms. Kinney stated that they were only considering gear and skiffs and that there were other places in town for people to store boats.

Council member Wells stated that he would have liked to have seen a period during the summer months, specifically at the Fisherman's Dock where there would be no charge for storage. He stated that it is a very useful piece of land for people with transit boats that need to get equipment unloaded and changed over to fisheries. His recommendation would have been for the dates of May 1<sup>st</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup> there would be no charge for use of that area. He stated that perhaps the Ports and Harbor Commission could look into that in the future. Ms. Kinney stated that it was discussed that during the summer months if they were actively working on their gear that they would not be charged. But, once they came in to fill out the paper work for storage the fees would begin to apply. She stated that they wanted to support the fishermen and encourage the use of the land there because that is what the area is designated for. Council member Wells stated he would support this resolution but asked that Ms. Kinney review this process in the future to see if it is truly a workable solution. Ms. Kinney stated that this would give them a chance to see how the policy works and then if adjustments were needed they would be open to those in the future.

Council member Moore stated that she was amazed that there are eleven alternative storage areas in the City. Mayor Cottle stated that private companies are charging between \$30 - \$60 a month for storage. He pointed out that the City was charging less than the private businesses in

town. He stated that he felt it was wrong for the City to undercut private enterprise. He further explained that if this was an airport lease that we would have land owners and business owners in disagreement with this policy as it undercuts private enterprise. Mayor Cottle stated that the City is not charging enough in this instance. Mayor Cottle also stated that he disagreed with Council member Wells' position of not charging at the fisherman's dock during the summer months. He stated that if this was the case that people would leave their gear and belongings down there and never move them because there would be no incentive to encourage them to do so. Mayor Cottle also explained that the only reason it was agreed to let skiffs remain there is because they could not make it up the road on their trailers to get to another storage area.

Council member Ables asked if the City would provide snow removal for access. Ms. Kinney responded in the negative.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 5 yeas, 2 nays (Council member Prax and Mayor Cottle). Motion carried.

5. #10-55 – Authorizing Amendment #5 of the Lease of with Valdez Ocean Dock, Inc., DBA Big State Logistics, Changing the Legal Description from Lots 1 & 2, Alaska Tideland Survey 865 to Parcel A, Alaska Tideland Survey 564

Council member Moore moved, seconded by Council member Cobb, to approve Resolution No. 10-55.

Mayor Cottle asked if there was a cost associated with this or if this was just a legal description change. Ms. Von Bargaen replied that there was no cost.

Council member Moore asked if the lessee was aware of this and if they would change it on their records. Ms. Von Bargaen stated that written correspondence has been provided to the lessee regarding the change. The lease documents will be changed and provided to the lessee for signatures. Council member Moore asked if it was just changed on the lease and not the plat. Ms. Von Bargaen stated that the reason there is a problem with the legal description is because we assumed the original state lease survey was an actual recorded platted piece of property. In fact, it was not. It was only surveyed for lease purposes for the state of Alaska. When we had a surveyor look into this it was determined that they were not actual parcels and that is why the description is changing. Even

this legal description of parcel A is not platted. It is just surveyed for lease purposes.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 7 yeas. Motion carried.

## XI. REPORTS

### 1. Bear Mitigation Report

Council member Prax stated that in regard to the recommendations in the report that he is in agreement on the bears at the south side but that the in-town bears need to be treated as more of a nuisance and eliminated. He stated that he is in disagreement with requiring residents to change their garbage cans and the city purchasing a new garbage truck due to the bears that wander through town. He stated that city administration is over complicating the issue. Council member Prax also stated that we cannot start ticketing people for everything they might leave out that could attract bears. He stated that these are animals and should be treated as such. Council member Prax stated that bears that are a problem should be eliminated.

Council member Moore stated that she has been concerned because she has lived in Valdez about as long as it has been here and there have not been these issues in the past. She traveled to Seldovia during the previous week where bears there were walking down the middle of the street and was told to watch out for them. Seward has had a problem with bears as well as Anchorage. These are all areas where bears have not been an issue before. Council member Moore's concern is what is happening to the south central ecosystem that is producing more bears looking for food to eat. She pointed out that there has to be something that is causing this to occur. She stated that if you have food for bears they will keep coming. If you do not, they will stay away.

Council member Ables stated that she appreciated the report and that she felt the garbage truck should be purchased and proper trash receptacles put in place to prevent the bear problems. It would benefit the city. It would also help the staff collecting garbage in making it safer to do so. She expressed her position of saving the bears if at all possible.

Council member Cobb stated that one of the problems is that we have created the situation. There is a proliferation of bears because of good weather and fish. Each time a female bear has cubs that are allowed to raid garbage all summer, garbage bears are created. It is a compounding

thing that keeps multiplying until you take care of the problem. He stated that the bears will not be going away. Therefore, they must be eliminated. Council member Cobb continued stating that he is concerned about children being injured by bears in town. He listed all of the instances where he had seen bears this summer in town which were plentiful and stated that it is time to take care of this problem or it would only get worse. Council member Ables stated that she can almost agree with Council member Cobb but that she does feel preventative efforts can be made by purchasing appropriate trash cans and an appropriate garbage truck to discourage bears from ever becoming garbage scavengers. Council member Cobb stated that we would then have garbage cans that no one could lift.

Council member Wells stated that Valdez has been here since 1901 and that it is doubtful that the bears just discovered garbage this year. He stated that prevention methods should be taken, but he did not support completely re-inventing our garbage policy because of one summer. Council member Wells stated his concern with spending thousands of dollars on a problem that will simply reoccur. He stated that he did not feel that the community could completely eliminate the draw to town for the bears by preventative measures detailed in the report. He stated that he has had bears in his driveway at 10:30 at night near the Teen Center. Children are out walking around in the area which is very concerning.

Mayor Cottle expressed his opinion that the bears should be eliminated; further stating that there is not one bear that is worth saving over a child. He reiterated that safety of children comes first. He emphasized again that the city must eliminate the bears. Mayor Cottle also addressed the garbage can issue stating that as it is now the City finds it difficult to get residents to buy regular trash cans. Now we are going to force them to use a larger heavier can. He questioned who would enforce this and stated that there is a reason that Fish and Game will not let us relocate the bears. It is because they are over populated. He stated that the bears can be eliminated by the police department in a safe manner, but that elimination is the key. He stated that public safety must come first.

Council member McCann stated that he believed it is a cyclic thing. There were a large amount of rabbits in town that the bears were feeding on. Now that the rabbits are gone they are turning to garbage. Council member McCann stated that he agreed with eliminating the bears because if we do not they will be back because their food supply is limited. He stated that there is not a garbage can that will keep the bears out of town. He agreed that the bears must be eliminated.

Police Chief Comer addressed the Council stating that the purpose of the report put together by Ms. Von Barga was to give a summary of the current status of the entirety of the bear issue. Chief Comer stated that it is a very complex situation with several different contributing factors. The solution is not as simple as deciding to kill all town bears. This is simply a summary of the entire picture of the problem. He stated that a common sense approach is being used. Police officers will not be told to eliminate every bear in town. We are trying to come up with ideas and solutions to deal with the different types of issues. It is not a matter of killing, trapping or moving bears it is an effort to explore options to meet all of the needs of Valdez. In regards to public safety and the bears on Dayville Road there are traffic issues with people crossing the road to see the bears and often traffic is being reduced to one lane at times. This is a dangerous situation that needs to be addressed as well. Chief Comer stated that over the summer there have been over 200 bear complaints and he assured the Council that all calls and complaints are taken seriously. However, they are not taking it to the point that they are putting the public's safety at risk by directing police officers in town to eliminate every single bear they encounter. He stated that they are trying to keep everyone's needs in mind in addressing this serious issue.

2. Building Permit Report

XII. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council member Moore

Council member Moore stated that she was in Seldovia last week for the RCAC meeting. They had a bear problem there. RCAC has a two page code of conduct document that she is willing to share for those interested.

Council member Moore brought up the road from the Harbor Master Office where there are people walking around and are in the street obstructing traffic. She suggested that perhaps a four way stop or a one way road during the busy months be considered for this area. She stated that there is an accident waiting to happen in this area.

Council member Prax

Council member Prax reported that the Fish derbies ended nicely. He stated that they broke even on expenses due much in part by the increase in the Women's Derby. He reported that he did not hear much about the harbor this year as far as

issues with the operation of the launch or other problems. Council member Prax thanked the Harbor staff for their role in the success of the season.

Council member Cobb

Council member Cobb reported that there are still silver salmon in the harbor.

Council member McCann

Council member McCann requested that some picnic tables be stored that are accessible for winter use specifically for the Tailgate Alaska event. Mr. Phillips, Assistant City Manager, asked how many tables would be needed. Council member McCann suggested that 6-12 tables would be preferable. Ms. Kinney, Port Director, asked where the tables would be used. Council member McCann stated that they would be used in town, most likely at the Best Western hotel where the event was held last year.

Council member Ables

Council member Ables asked where we are with the Harbor issues brought up at the last Council meeting by Colleen Stevens. Ms. Kinney, Port Director, stated that she has spoken with the Ports and Harbor Commission and they have a plan to work with the Coast Guard this winter and figure out what they are willing to enforce. She said that at her staff meeting it was discussed to do a one page informational flyer about Harbor safety and the security zone with Alyeska. Council member Cobb commented that the only agency that can declare no fishing zones is Fish and Game. He stated that they need to be involved with this process and pointed out that this was not a navigation issue but a trolling and fishing issue. Council member Cobb stated that the harbor needs to be declared a no fishing area and only Fish and Game has the authority to do that. Ms. Kinney said they would try to incorporate both agencies in the plan. Mayor Cottle suggested that the promotional material be located at the harbor fuel dock.

Mayor Cottle

Mayor Cottle stated that he has received calls about the new LED lighting installed in town. People are complaining that the lights are not bright enough to light up intersections. He stated that it is difficult to see children crossing the streets. He cautioned that if nothing else, please be aware of children in these areas. Council member Prax stated that he did not believe that there was less light but that there was less of a glare from the new lights. Council member Ables stated that at West Klutina there should be lights located on both sides of the

street. She stated that it is very difficult to see when you are turning left at night. She asked that an additional street light be installed in this location.

XIII. COUNCIL TRAVEL

Council member Cobb stated that he would be in Cordova during the week of September 27<sup>th</sup>.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Cottle adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm.