

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the Bethel City Council was held on April 27, 2021 at 6:30 p.m., in the Council chambers, Bethel, Alaska.

Mayor DeWitt called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Comprising a quorum of the Council, the following members were present:
City Council Member Rose Henderson (telephonically) City Council Member Mark Springer (telephonically) City Council Member Perry Barr (telephonically) City Council Member Conrad McCormick (telephonically) City Council Member Alyssa Leary (telephonically) Vice-Mayor Haley Hanson (telephonically) Mayor Michelle DeWitt (telephonically)
Members Absent:
Also in attendance were the following:
Interim City Manager Peter Williams (telephonically), City Clerk Lori Strickler (telephonically), City Attorney Libby Bakalar (telephonically)

4. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD – Five minutes per person

Motion to suspend the rules to request that under People to be Heard, participants identify what community they live in.

Moved by:	Rose Henderson
Seconded by:	Perry Barr
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries



Kathy Hanson, location of residence is Bethel. Spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25. Explained the excise tax is a tax that is applied to the distributor not to the consumer. The distributor has presented their intent to pass that tax on to their customers, it is time to make choices.

Richard Robb, location of residence is Bethel. Spoke in opposition to Ordinance 20-25. The tax will cause inflationary pressure. Disproportionately will affect people with lower incomes. The City does not currently need the money and future councils could use the money for other purposes if they decided. It is not the role of the city to influence dietary habits.

Ellen Hodges, location of residence is Bethel. Spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25. Encouraged the Council to support community recreation. If council is unsure, requested they table the issue.

Grant Fairbanks, location of residence is Bethel. Provided frustration to the way corporations were promoting their position on the Sugar Sweetened Beverage Excise Tax. Provided explanation on the amount of income tax money that used to help cover the costs of dental work our community. If this ordinance does pass, the funds should be used by for dental health and education.

Ana Hoffman, location of residence in Bethel. Reaffirmed her statements from the last city council meeting. Provided information from the Stanford Business School on a study of the impacts of similar excises taxes in other communities. As the Chief Executive Officer of Bethel Native Corporation, provided a statement of opposition on behalf of the Board. The Bethel Native Corporation encouraged the Council to present this question to the voters.

Cezary Maczynski, location of residence in Bethel. Spoke in opposition of Ordinance 20-25. An increase in tax will raise tax on other goods. The people should vote.

Joel Thomas, location of residence is Bethel. Encouraged everyone to read Gloria Simeon article in the Delta Discovery. Supported a community vote.

Denisa Livingston, Navajo nation, New Mexico. Provided information on her and her group's grass roots work to help improve the Navajo Nation's health by addressing governmental policies. Suggested the goals of Ordinance 20-25 are similar to those she is working with that help raise money to improve community wellness. This is an attempt to save and improve the lives of the next generations.

Sharon Chakuchun, location of residence is Bethel. Spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Spoke about the corporate influence on the community. People don't change unhealthy behavior by education alone, suggested the tax is an incentive tax to encourage people to choose different options and healthy choices will save the families money in the long run. Suggested to pass or table the issue. The council should consider requiring or preventing outside campaign contributions if voted on by the people.

Lorin Bradberry, location of residence is Bethel. Spoke in opposition of Ordinance 20-25. Supported the statements made by Ana Hoffman. Stated concerns of bacteria as a cause for tooth decay, not just sugar. Presented some questions on Ordinance 21-14 regarding exemptions for rental utilities and realtors.

Jim Krieger, location of residence is Seattle. Spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25. Provided explanation on how the excise tax being proposed could be used to support community wellness. Presented experience with the distributors and the sugar sweetened beverage industries and their marketing tactics; suggested the information they are presenting are not accurate. Suggested the tax has been proven to work in the communities they have been implemented in.

Shadi Rabi, location of residence is Bethel. spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25. Suggested the distributors could absorb the tax, but if not, the city would benefit from the revenue either way. Recommended passing or tabling the ordinance.

Eric Whitney, location of residence is Bethel. Spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25. In addition to the health impacts of sugar sweetened beverages, it creates a lot of trash in the community. If we can reduce the consumption of this product, the community would become a healthier place.

Victoria Sosa, location of residence is Bethel. On behalf of Ruth Abigail Miller. Spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25. Suggested the City Council should support a tax to improve the health of our community.

Barrie Levin, location of residence is Bethel. Spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25. After research, has found the effects of a sugar sweetened beverage tax works in other communities. Suggested we need to take steps to improve our community and region's health and prevent health problems for children.

The City Clerk's Office Read from the Submitted Public Testimony

Tom Hawkins- provided statement of opposition to ordinance 20-25.

Mary K. Evan-Morgan and Clarence Morgan-Provided a statement of opposition to Ordinance 20-25.

Leanna Ray-Colby-Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Muriel Barrus- Provided a statement in Opposition of Ordinance 20-25.

William Eggimann-Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

K Jane McClure-Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Diane McEachern-Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Eileen Arnold-Provided a statement in favor in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Gloria Simeon-Provided a statement in opposition of Ordinance 20-25.

Anne Kosacheff-Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

James Parish-Provided a statement in opposition of Ordinance 20-25.

Mark Reynolds- Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Robert Carlson-Provided a statement in opposition of Ordinance 20-25.

Susan Taylor-recommended the public vote on taxing Sugar Sweetened Beverages.

Lisa Whalen-Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Joseph Klejka- Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Beth Tressler-Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Amanda Magnusen-Provided a statement in opposition of Ordinance 20-25.

Beverly Hoffman-Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Josh Anderson-Provided a statement in opposition of Ordinance 20-25.

Elizabeth Bates-Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

The testimony moved back to those individuals participating in the meeting:

Joe Moses, location of residence is Bethel. Suggested the City Council present the excise tax question to the voters of Bethel as it would affect the surrounding communities as well.

Daniel Maczynski, location of residence is Bethel. Stated opposition to Ordinance 20-25 and suggested the question be presented to the voters.

5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA AND REGULAR AGENDA

Main Motion: Approval of the Consent and Regular Agenda.

Moved by:	Mark Springer
Seconded by:	Rose Henderson
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

6. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Item 6.1. - *4-13-2021 Regular City Council Meeting

Passed on the consent agenda.

7. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Item 7.1. - Committee/Commission/Board Agendas And Draft Meeting Minutes

Port Commission, Council Member Springer- Nothing to report.

Planning Commission, Vice-Mayor Hanson- No meeting since last meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2021 6:30 p.m.

Community Action Grant Technical Review Board, Council Member Barr- The next meeting is going to be on June 2nd and June 9th. Provided a reminder of the application period, May 1st to May 30th.

Parks, Recreation, Aquatic Health and Safety Center Committee, Mayor DeWitt- A meeting has not been held since the last City Council Meeting.

Finance Committee, Council Member McCormick- Received a Committee Training from the City Clerk's Office. The Committee also reviewed an Informative Memorandum presented by the Finance Department outlining corrective measures the City is taking on an IRS issue.

Public Works Committee, Council Member Leary- Received an update from Administration on the Piped services project within the Avenues. Reviewed hauled utility services ordinance with Administration which were approved for recommendation to City Council.

Public Safety and Transportation Commission, Council Member Henderson- A meeting has not been held since the last City Council Meeting.

8. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Item 9.1. - Public Hearing Of Ordinance 20-25: Creating An Excise Tax On The Distribution Of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Products (Parks Recreation Aquatic Health And Safety Center Committee)

Mayor DeWitt opened the Public Hearing.

Pam Conrad- Spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25. Presented concerns over corporate influence on our community. Spoke of the cost and nutritional value of healthy food as opposed to soft drinks.

Eric Whitney- Spoke in favor of Ordinance 20-25. It is a vote to make the community better and healthier.

David Hicks- Spoke in opposition of Ordinance 20-25. Agreed this topic has become highly propagandized on both sides. This ordinance will affect the lower income people in this community and raise the cost of groceries. Most people, who this tax affects, cannot afford to utilize the pool facility. Education is the way to handle this issue.

Clerk Strickler read email testimony.

Robert Carlson-Provided a statement of opposition to Ordinance 20-25.

Elisabeth Jacobson- Provided a statement in favor of Ordinance 20-25.

Mayor Dewitt closed the Public Hearing.

The Motion to Introduce Ordinance 20-25 was made at the April 13, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting by Council Member Hanson and seconded by Council Member McCormick.

Motion to postpone Ordinance 20-25 Indefinitely.

Moved by:	Mark Springer
Seconded by:	Rose Henderson
In favor:	Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	Perry Barr
Results:	Motion Carries

Motion to take a ten minute break.

Moved by:	Mark Springer
Seconded by:	Rose Henderson
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

Item 9.2. - Public Hearing Of Ordinance 21-13: Authorizing The Acquisition Of Interest In Land For A Utility Easement From Irvin L. Kreider And Diana S. Kreider, Co-Trustees Of Kreider Revocable Trust Involving The Bethel Avenues Piped Water And Sewer Project - Phase I (Interim City Manager Williams)

Mayor DeWitt opened the Public Hearing.

No one present to be heard.

Mayor DeWitt closed the Public Hearing.

Main Motion: Adopt Ordinance 21-13.

Moved by:	Rose Henderson
Seconded by:	Mark Springer
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

Item 9.3. - Public Hearing Of Ordinance 21-14: Amending Bethel Municipal Code 4.16.160 Sales Tax Exemptions And Limitations (Interim City Manager Williams)

Mayor DeWitt was determined to have a conflict of interest on this issue at the last

regular meeting by a majority vote of the members. Mayor DeWitt did not take part in discussion or voting on this item. Vice-Mayor Hanson presided over this item of business.

Vice-Mayor Hanson opened the Public Hearing.

No one present to be heard.

Vice-Mayor Hanson closed the Public Hearing.

Main Motion: Adopt Ordinance 21-14.

Moved by:	Conrad McCormick
Seconded by:	Rose Henderson

Motion to suspend the rules to hear from Assistant Finance Director Xavier Mason.

Moved by:	Conrad McCormick
Seconded by:	Rose Henderson
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

Motion to Postpone until the next Regular Meeting on May 11, 2021.

Moved by:	Mark Springer
Seconded by:	Rose Henderson
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

Item 9.4. - Public Hearing Of Budget Ordinance 20-12(l): Amending The City Of Bethel Fiscal Year 2021 Budget-Water Sewer Study- COVID Food Distribution- Community Action Grant- Bethel Heights Water Treatment Facility- Hauled Refuse (Interim City Manager)

Mayor DeWitt was determined to have a conflict of interest on this issue at the last regular meeting by a majority vote of the members. Mayor DeWitt did not take part in discussion or voting on this item. Vice-Mayor Hanson presided over this item of business.

*Vice-Mayor Hanson opened the Public Hearing.
No one present to be heard.
Vice-Mayor Hanson closed the Public Hearing.*

Main Motion: Adopt Ordinance 20-12(I).

Moved by:	Mark Springer
Seconded by:	Alyssa Leary
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

10. NEW BUSINESS

Item 10.1. - *Introduction Of Ordinance 21-15: Temporarily Reducing Payments Listed Under 5.20.160 A. Of The Bethel Municipal Code For Taxicab, River Taxi, Limousine Or Bus Permit Not In Operational Statues As A Result Of COVID-19 (Public Safety And Transportation Commission)

Passed on the consent agenda.

Item 10.2. - *Introduction Of Budget Ordinance 20-12(m): Amending The City Of Bethel Fiscal Year 2021 Budget- Property Maintenance- Piped Water- Hauled Sewer (Interim City Manager Williams)

Passed on the consent agenda.

Item 10.3. - *Resolution 21-08: Providing Support Of The Kuskokwim 300 Race Committee's Application For A Grant For The Development And Repair Of Trails And Trail Marking In The Region (Vice-Mayor Hanson)

Passed on the consent agenda.

Item 10.4. - AM 21-08: Purchase Of Axon TASER Conducted Energy Weapons (Interim City Manager Williams)

Main Motion: Approve 21-08.

Moved by:	Alyssa Leary
Seconded by:	Perry Barr

In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

Motion to extend the meeting past 11:00 p.m.

Moved by:	Mark Springer
Seconded by:	Haley Hanson
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Mark Springer, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

Item 10.5. - AM 21-09: Direct Administration To Sign Memorandum Of Agreement Between State Of Alaska And City Of Bethel Containing Grant Terms And Conditions Allowing The City To Receive Up To \$284,729.75 To Support COVID-19 Vaccine Administration, Testing, And Other COVID-19 Related Activities (Interim City Manager Williams)

Motion to adopt Action Memorandum 21-09.

Moved by:	Perry Barr
Seconded by:	Rose Henderson

Council Member Barr declared he works for LKSD and is President on the Board of Bethel Family Clinic. Mayor DeWitt determined there is no substantial conflict of interest on this item.

Council Member Springer departed the meeting at 11:01 p.m. due to audio difficulty.

In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

Item 10.6. - Negotiated Employment Agreement Between The City Of Bethel And Peter A. Williams (Mayor DeWitt)

Approve the negotiated agreement with Peter A. Williams.

Moved by:	Perry Barr
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Seconded by:	Rose Henderson
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

Item 10.7. - *Personal Leave- City Clerk- April 28th- May 7th, 2021 (Mayor DeWitt)

Passed on the consent agenda.

Item 10.8. - *US District Court Jury Duty- City Manager- Month of May 2021 (Mayor DeWitt)

Passed on the consent agenda.

11. REPORTS

Item 11.1. - Mayor's Report

Item 11.2. - City Manager's Report

Item 11.3. - Clerk's Report

12. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Mayor DeWitt- Thanked Attorney Bakalar for her support to the City Council. Thanked all the people that spoke up on Ordinance 20-25.

Vice-Mayor Hanson- Congratulated Kevin Morgan, Deputy City Clerk, for passing the passport acceptance agent test. Congratulated Peter Williams on his employment agreement. Thanked all the people that spoke up on Ordinance 20-25. Hopes the public finds a way to address this issue.

Council Member Barr- Congratulated Peter Williams on his employment agreement.

Council Member Leary- Congratulated Peter Williams. Thanked all the people that spoke up on the Ordinance 20-25. Thanked the Park Recreation Aquatic Health and

Safety Center Committee for their hard work on getting Ordinance 20-25 created and presented.

Council Member Henderson- Congratulated Peter Williams on his employment agreement. and Kevin Morgan, Deputy City Clerk, for passing the passport acceptance test. Thanked all the people that spoke up on the Ordinance 20-25.

Council Member McCormick- Thanked all those who participated in the Sexual Assault Prevention town hall. Congratulated Peter Williams on his employment agreement and Kevin Morgan, Deputy City Clerk, for passing his passport acceptance test. Thanked all the people that spoke up on Ordinance 20-25.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

14. ADJOURNMENT

Main Motion: Adjournment.

Moved by:	Haley Hanson
Seconded by:	Alyssa Leary
In favor:	Perry Barr, Haley Hanson, Alyssa Leary, Michelle DeWitt, Rose Henderson, Conrad McCormick
Opposed:	None
Results:	Motion Carries

Meeting ended at 11:23 p.m.


Michelle DeWitt (May 19, 2021 13:01 AKDT)

Michelle DeWitt, Mayor

ATTEST:


Lori Strickler, City Clerk

4-27-2021 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report

2021-05-19

Created:	2021-05-17
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Agreement completed.

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