

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Palmer City Council was held on May 25, 2010, at 7 pm in the council chambers, Palmer, Alaska.

Mayor Combs called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

**B. ROLL CALL**

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

Mike Chmielewski	Brad Hanson
Kevin Brown	Richard Best
John Combs	
Ken Erbey	

The following council member was absent and excused by the council:

Kathrine Vanover

Also in attendance were the following:

Bill Allen, City Manager  
Michael Gatti, City Attorney  
Shelly Acteson, Deputy City Clerk

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Ray Ritari, Chairman of the Palmer Community Center Focus Group.

**D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Approval of Consent Agenda
  - a. Introduction – Ordinance No. 10-012: Amending Chapter 17.84 Planned Unit Development (PUD) to Add or Delete Language in Various Sections of the Chapter (IM 10-048)
  - b. Introduction – Ordinance No. 10-013: Amending Palmer Municipal Code Chapter 12.45 Park and Recreational Facility Regulations to Permit the Sale and Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages at the Palmer Ice Arena (IM 10-05)Action Memorandum 10-033: Confirm the Mayor’s Appointment of Richard Stryken to the City of Palmer Board of Economic Development
2. Minutes of Previous Meetings
  - a. May 4, 2010 Special Meeting
  - b. May 11, 2010 Special Meeting

c. May 11, 2010 Regular Meeting

## **E. COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUESTS**

Pamela Stephens, President-Elect, Greater Palmer Chamber of Commerce:

- discussed ideas put forth during the Chamber's retreat; and
- provided Council with an update concerning chamber issues.

Jillyan Webb, Executive Director, Greater Palmer Chamber of Commerce:

- expressed gratitude to the Public Works Department and the volunteers who helped with Clean Up Day;
- delineated resolutions recently adopted by the Chamber Board; and
- provided Council with a verbal calendar of forthcoming Chamber-sponsored events.

## **F. REPORTS**

### **Item 1 – City Manager's Report**

City Manager Bill Allen reported on the following items:

- Accolades to the Chamber of Commerce;
- Meeting with Alex Cook;
- City of Palmer employee Dawn Webster's retirement party;
- FAA compliance issues;
- 2009 City audit;
- Carrs-Safeway project;
- Annual Public Works Golf Tournament;
- Alaska Municipal Managers Association meeting;
- Recent press conference;
- Large appliance retrieval by Public Works starting on June 1; and
- Upcoming street and water projects.

Council Member Best:

- questioned who was responsible for completing the Alaska and Bonanza Street projects.

City Manager Allen:

- addressed Council concerns with the Alaska and Bonanza Street projects.

Public Works Director Carter Cole:

- quelled Council concerns.

### **Item 2 - City Clerk's Report**

### **Item 3 - Mayor's Report**

Mayor Combs reported on the following items:

- Clean Up Day;
- Meeting with Becky Stoka;
- Sister City Program Meeting; and
- Annual Relocation Guide letter.

## G. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mr. Larry Hill:

- commented on revenue and tax diversity issues;
- provided an email concerning a Costco in Palmer; and
- requested Council reconsider their action concerning nonrenewal of the City Manager's contract.

Mr. Mike Madar:

- spoke against Resolution No. 10-032; and
- stated the legislation was a "job killer".

Mr. Tom Healy, Alaska Rock Products Association Representative:

- expressed confusion with the legislation;
- stated inaccuracies exist in the document; and
- questioned the anonymity of the author of the legislation.

## H. PUBLIC HEARINGS

### I. ACTION MEMORANDA

**Item 1-** Action Memorandum 10-037: Authorize the City Manager to Purchase a Set of Hurst Rescue Tools in the Amount of \$35,609.54 for Palmer Fire and Rescue with Grant Funds from Assistance to Firefighters Grant Using the Proprietary Procurement Process

MOVED BY:	Chmielewski	To approve Action Memorandum 10-037
SECONDED BY:	Brown	

Council Member Best:

- asked for clarification concerning tool applicability.

Public Safety Director Jon Owen provided a staff report.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Carried by unanimous voice vote			
	Yes:		No:
Chmielewski	Combs	Brown	
Best	Hanson	Erbey	

## J. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**Item 1 - Palmer Municipal Code 2.30 Board of Economic Development**

Council Member Best:

- explained the reason the issue was on the agenda; and
- requested review of purpose, creation and duties of the Board of Economic Development (BED).

Council Member Chmielewski:

- commented in favor of the recent joint meeting with the BED;

- spoke in favor of the group’s efforts;
- commented favorably on the Draft Economic Development Strategy; and
- encouraged Council to stay in touch with the BED.

Council Member Brown:

- spoke in favor of the Draft Economic Development Strategy document;
- remarked favorably on sub-committees of the BED; and
- spoke of the inspirational quality of the members’ commitment to the project.

Mayor Combs:

- expounded on the positive energy felt during the joint meeting; and
- endorsed the Code verbiage.

Council Member Hanson:

- commented on the joint meeting;
- advocated for developing strategies to implement prioritized economic development infrastructure; and
- spoke in support of the BED continued work on economic development strategies for the City.

MOVED BY:	Best	To suspend the Board of Economic Development
SECONDED BY:		

The motion failed for lack of a second.

City Attorney Michael Gatti stated the BED would have to be disbanded via an ordinance, not simply a motion.

**Item 2 - Action Memorandum 10-030: Approve the Capital Construction Project Development Process**

*The motion to approve was brought forth from the May 11 Regular Meeting.*

MOVED BY:	Erbey	To approve Action Memorandum 10-030
SECONDED BY:	Best	

City Manager Bill Allen:

- put forth a historical prospectus of the legislation;
- spoke in favor of the legislation;
- stated a project was not considered a “project” until the funding was approved;
- spoke in favor of efficient and effective project implementation; and
- explained the process in greater detail.

Council Member Chmielewski:

- questioned how the legislation would affect Capital Construction Projects in the current year.

Council Member Hanson:

- commented on the increased bureaucracy within the process;
- questioned the process for unexpected and immediate funding opportunities; and

- voiced concern with the timing aspect of the process.

Mayor Combs:

- spoke in favor of the legislation;
- voiced concern with City Manager Allen’s recent comments to the media;
- requested a definition of “numerous interruptions”; and
- reminded Council of its oversight authority.

Council Member Brown:

- advocated for the legislation.

Council Member Best:

- expressed concern with the lack of public input during Step 5; and
- requested more steps in the process to encompass additional public hearings.

Community Development Director Sandra Garley:

- explained the Planning and Zoning criteria for project review.

Primary Amendment #1 to Main Motion		
Moved by:	Hanson	To amend by adding “Any Public Works project may be considered by the Council at any time notwithstanding the City of Palmer Capital Project Development process” to the flow chart and the narrative
Seconded by:	Chmielewski	

Vote on primary amendment #1: Motion carried by unanimous voice vote				
Yes:			No:	
Erbey	Brown	Best	Best	
Chmielewski	Combs	Hanson		

Council Member Best:

- expressed apprehension with the lack of opportunities for public input during the design stage; and
- requested public involvement as a project progresses through the design phase.

City Manager Allen candidly explained the design phase process.

Public Works Director Carter Cole:

- extrapolated the schematic.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Carried by 5 to 1 voice vote				
Yes:			No:	
Chmielewski	Combs	Brown	Best	
Hanson	Erbey			

**Item 3 - Resolution No. 10-026:** Amending the City of Palmer Fee Schedule to Reflect a Fee for Massage Therapist Licenses and to Provide for Housekeeping Amendments (IM 10-039)

MOVED BY:	Chmielewski	To approve Resolution No. 10-026
SECONDED BY:	Best	

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Carried by unanimous voice vote		
Yes:		No:
Chmielewski	Combs	Brown
Best	Hanson	Erbey

**Item 4 - Resolution No. 10-029:** Approving a Supplemental Appropriation of \$52,000 from the General Fund Undesignated Fund Balance (Fund 01) to the General Projects Fund (Fund 08) to Construct Air Handling Improvements to the Public Works Maintenance Facility at 1316 South Bonanza Street (IM 10-042)

MOVED BY:	Erbey	To approve Resolution No. 10-029
SECONDED BY:	Chmielewski	

Council Member Best:

- requested clarification concerning the project installation.

Director Cole clarified the project.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Carried by unanimous voice vote		
Yes:		No:
Chmielewski	Combs	Brown
Best	Hanson	Erbey

**Item 5 - Resolution No. 10-032:** Recommending Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly Adoption of an Ordinance Amending Borough Earth Materials Extraction Regulations to Include Borough Standards for Reclamation (IM 10-045)

MOVED BY:	Chmielewski	To approve postpone discussion on the legislation until the September 14, 2010 Regular Council meeting
SECONDED BY:	Erbey	

Council Member Chmielewski:

- provided reasons to postpone the legislation;
- stated the City should address how it plans to deal with earth extraction within its boundary;
- reminded Council the Matanuska-Susitna Borough could trump the adopted legislation;
- commented in favor of obtaining Planning and Zoning Commission's input before addressing the issue of earth extraction;
- explained the second issue was how the City plans to deal with reclamation; and
- requested Council provide staff with intended content to formulate a revised resolution.

Council Member Hanson:

- expressed reservations with postponing the legislation in its current form.

Primary Amendment #1 to Main Motion		
Moved by:	Combs	To amend by setting the date of postponement to August 24, 2010
Seconded by:	Chmielewski	

City Attorney Gatti clarified the requirements of a "motion to postpone".

Council Member Best:

- spoke against postponement.

Council Member Brown:

- stated the legislation in the current form was not what he requested.

Vote: Motion carried by 5 to 1 voice vote			
Yes:		No:	
Erbey	Chmielewski	Best	Brown
Hanson	Combs		

Council Member Brown:

- spoke in favor of voting the legislation up or down in its entirety tonight; and
- requested the Clerk submit different legislation during a future meeting.

Attorney Gatti:

- suggested removing the date of postponement and change to "postpone indefinitely".

Primary Amendment #2 to Main Motion		
Moved by:	Brown	To postpone indefinitely
Seconded by:	Chmielewski	

Council Member Chmielewski:

- spoke in favor of the postponing indefinitely; and
- suggested adding the issue to an upcoming council meeting agenda.

Vote: Motion carried by 4 to 2 roll call vote			
Yes:		No:	
Erbey	Chmielewski	Best	Hanson
Combs	Brown		

**Item 6 - Resolution No. 10-033:** Approving a \$14,555 Supplemental Appropriation from the General Fund Undesignated Fund Balance to Perform an External Audit of City of Palmer Credit Cards (IM 10-046)

MOVED BY:	Hanson	To approve Resolution No. 10-033
SECONDED BY:	Best	

Council Member Erbey:

- disagreed with spending funds in the manner described in the legislation.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Carried by 4 to 2 roll call vote			
	Yes:		No:
Brown	Combs	Chmielewski	Erbey
Best	Hanson		

**Item 7 - Resolution No. 10-035:** Approving a Supplemental Appropriation of \$13,000 from the General Fund Undesignated Fund Balance (Fund 01) to the General Projects Fund (Fund 08) to install the new Emergency Fuel Tank at the Public Works Maintenance Facility at 1316 South Bonanza Street (IM 10-049)

MOVED BY:	Combs	To approve Resolution No. 10-035
SECONDED BY:	Erbey	

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Carried by unanimous voice vote			
	Yes:		No:
Chmielewski	Combs	Brown	
Best	Hanson	Erbey	

**Item 8 - City Manager’s Monthly Report Concerning Public Construction Projects**

City Manager Allen:

- commented on the Darron Drive park project; and
- discussed funding for the ice arena doors and the arena expansion.

**K. NEW BUSINESS**

**Item 1 - Ray Ritari, Chair – Palmer Community Center Focus Group Concerning the Draft Feasibility Study of a New Conference & Community Center**

Mr. Ray Ritari, Chairman, Palmer Community Center Focus Group:

- commented on the memo requesting Council action on options identified by the Focus Group; and
- stated the Draft Feasibility Study of a New Conference and Community Center was an excellent starting point for the community and the City.

MOVED BY:	Hanson	To accept the Draft Feasibility Study of a New Conference and Community Center
SECONDED BY:	Best	

Council Member Chmielewski:

- expressed gratitude to the Focus Groups; and
- stressed the importance of the document and the work accomplished by the ad hoc committee.

Council Member Hanson:

- expressed concern with the rate of return on the project delineated in the document; and
- commented on the premature nature of the project.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Carried by unanimous voice vote			
	Yes:		No:
Chmielewski	Combs	Brown	
Best	Hanson	Erbey	

Mr. Ritari:

- responded to Council questions; and
- compared discussed the possible income generated by conferences versus conventions

Council Member Brown:

- commented on the Carlson Center in Fairbanks;
- reminded the Council to not let cost be the sole driver when deciding on a project; and
- requested council support to add discussion regarding the "next steps to take" relating to the Feasibility Study of a New Conference and Community Center. Council Member Chmielewski offered support.

Council Member Chmielewski:

- stated the Council had a general appreciation for the value of the Matanuska Maid block property.

Ms. Delena Johnson, Vice-Chair, Palmer Community Center Focus Group:

- complimented the consultant on his good Midwestern sensibility;
- spoke in favor of continued review and public input for the project; and
- reminded Council the project would remain "community-driven".

Council Member Erbey:

- remarked favorably on the Nome Convention Center.

City Manager Allen:

- thanked the Focus Group for their hard work;
- commented on the Carlson Center in Fairbanks;
- noted other Alaskan cities with Convention Centers;
- described the Palmer Golf Course as one of the City's greatest assets; and
- expounded on the verbal commitment from the Rasmussen Foundation.

Mayor Combs:

- reminded council of the historical aspect of the Matanuska Maid property; and
- requested retention of a visible sign on the property.

**Item 2 - Resolution No. 10-036:** Accepting and Appropriating the Community Economic Stimulus Program Grant in the Amount of \$167,058.55 to Reimburse the City of Palmer for Insurance Costs (IM 10-051)

MOVED BY:	Chmielewski	To approve Resolution No. 10-036
SECONDED BY:	Best	

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Carried by unanimous voice vote			
	Yes:		No:
Chmielewski	Combs	Brown	
Best	Hanson	Erbey	

**Item 3 - Public Employees Retirement System Issue Concerning Council Member Best**

Council Member Best requested recusal. There were no objections.

MOVED BY:	Combs	To approve Council Member Best's enrollment in PERS retroactive to January 2003
SECONDED BY:	Hanson	

Council Member Hanson requested clarification.

Director of Administration Kelli Veech provided clarification.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Carried by unanimous voice vote			
	Yes:		No:
Chmielewski	Combs	Brown	
Best	Hanson	Erbey	

**Item 4 - Feasibility of a Proposal to the Avalanche Hockey Team**

City Manager Allen:

- commented on Ordinance No. 10-013;
- expounded on the possibility of the Avalanche Team of the North American Hockey League establishing the Palmer Ice Arena as their home base;
- requested Council support for continued exploration of the feasibility of the proposal;
- spoke of the economic stimulus provided by the team's 27 home games;
- discussed operations and maintenance costs;
- provided a time-line for the proposal; and
- stated a major sponsor was willing to assist financially with the cost of the arena upgrade.

Council Member Hanson:

- provided details of the opportunities presented by the proposal;
- imparted the importance of fan participation; and
- explained prime-time and non-prime time ice usage at the ice arena.

Ray Ritari:

- discussed the contract process.

Council Member Chmielewski:

- spoke in favor of proceeding with the proposal.

Council Member Erbey:

- commented on the Alaska Wild Indoor Football Team.

Council Member Brown and Council Member Best:

- spoke in support of proceeding.

Mayor Combs also supported moving ahead with the proposal.

**L. RECORD OF ITEMS PLACED ON THE TABLE**

**M. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

**N. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Council Member Chmielewski:

- commented on the Breathe Free Conference.

Council Member Brown:

- discussed the meeting with the consultant who formulated the Mat-Su Borough's Economic Development Strategy.

**O. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 10:55 pm.

**Approved this eighth day of June, 2010.**

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John C. Combs, Mayor

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Janette M. Bower, MMC, City Clerk