

A. CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Palmer City Council was held on July 6, 2010, at 6 pm in the council chambers, Palmer, Alaska.

Mayor Combs called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

B. ROLL CALL

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

Kathrine Vanover	Brad Hanson	Kevin Brown
Mike Chmielewski	Ken Erbey	John Combs

The following member was listed as absent and unexcused:

Richard Best

Also in attendance were the following:

Janette Bower, City Clerk
Michael Gatti, City Attorney

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by former Council Member Pippel.

D. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mike Madar:

- opined against the charrette process;
- spoke of the railroad tracks and monies needed to refurbish the tracks;
- stated regardless of the decisions made, some people would be upset; and
- expanded on leadership and resistance to change.

Tony Pippel:

- greeted the council; and
- stated his blood pressure and heart rate rose upon walking in the building.

Helen Munoz:

- questioned why railroads in other communities were still in existence;
- spoke of the railroad depot at the Alaska State Fair;
- stated the railroad did not divide the town;
- expanded on the commuter rail in existence in 1936; and

- voiced her desire to serve on the charrette committee.

E. NEW BUSINESS

Item 1- Action Memorandum 10-048: Authorize the City Manager to Award and Execute a Contract in an Amount not to Exceed \$79,960 with Corvus Design to Conduct a Charrette on the Future of the Downtown Railway Corridor

MOVED BY:	Chmielewski	To authorize Action Memorandum 10-048
SECONDED BY:	Vanover	

Director Sandra Garley:

- commented on the resolution to rescind resolution no. 09-029;
- stated when resolution no. 09-029 was repealed, the council voiced its desire to involve the community in the decision making process;
- described the charrette as a form of civic engagement;
- expanded on the request for proposal process;
- spoke of the public’s voice in the process;
- elaborated on the public’s lack of support for the City and the need to address the issue through a neutral facilitator;
- stated she would not do anything unethical or illegal regardless of who directed her to do so;
- expanded on her history as a Planner and her opinions as a professional planner; and
- spoke of the Palmer Wasilla Eastern Terminus committee process.

Council Member Chmielewski:

- spoke of his participation in the charrette process;
- commented on resolutions nos. 09-029 and 09-039;
- described the state of the current tracks;
- stated the charrette was an avenue to move the issue forward;
- expressed satisfaction with the Railroad’s involvement in the process;
- commented on his desire for the City to find additional funds to support the charrette process; and
- commented on possible funding options and voiced approval of action allowing the City Manager to approach funding entities.

Council Member Hanson:

- stated the decision regarding the railroad tracks did not need to be made using the charrette process;
- described the Railroad’s previous desire to maintain the tracks;
- inquired of the ability to complete the process internally; and
- expanded on previously completed studies and the price of the charrette study.

Mayor Combs:

- spoke of increased costs for the charrette;
- expanded on previously adopted resolutions on the matter;
- stated the track was not “going anywhere” and questioned the need to rush through the process;
- voiced confidence in Director Garley’s ability to complete the charrette process;

- stated he could not in good conscience authorize the 60 percent increase in costs for the charrette;
- described the tracks as a barrier to the elderly;
- commented on the overall expenditure of funds; and
- inquired of City Manager Allen's plan to raise additional funds.

Council Member Vanover:

- described the charrette as a bigger issue and stated it was imperative the issue be resolved;
- commented on the previous attempts to involve the community; and
- stated the charrette was the mechanism to resolve the downtown corridor issue.

Council Member Brown:

- voiced his support for the charrette process;
- expressed concern with the \$80,000 expense;
- stated the need to involve every citizen in the decision;
- spoke of the impossibility of coming to consensus on the matter;
- inquired of what Director Garley would do to change the community's perception of her employer's mandate regarding her work;
- asked of the City's liability should someone be injured on the railroad crossings and rights-of-way;
- stated if the City intended to use the corridor for public gatherings, the City should begin to question the City's liability; and
- stated if was the City's goal to become a walkable community, it was time to begin the conversation with the citizens.

Attorney Gatti:

- voiced his presumption that in the event of an accident, liability would remain with the railroad.

Council Member Erbey:

- described the charrette cost as a lot of money;
- recalled the individuals who implied the City was not listening to them;
- voiced concern with the end result and the lack of resolution of the railroad track issue; and
- spoke of the trust issue with the community and the need to reestablish trust.

Primary Amendment #1		
Moved by:	Combs	To add the language: before awarding the contract the additional \$29,960 be fully secured before the award occurs
Seconded by:	Hanson	

Council Member Brown:

- inquired of the council's ability to postpone as stated in the motion.

Attorney Gatti:

- suggested a reduced scope of work; and
- raised the possibility of a delay of the award until the funding was received.

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of securing additional funds.

Vote on primary amendment #1: Failed 1-5				
Yes:			No:	
Chmielewski	Brown	Vanover	Combs	
Hanson	Erbey			

Motion to Postpone		
Moved by:	Chmielewski	To postpone to August 10 with the understanding that the City Manager has 30 days to find additional funds
Seconded by:	Vanover	

Vote on motion to postpone: Carried unanimously				
Yes:			No:	
Chmielewski	Brown	Vanover		
Hanson	Erbey	Combs		

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Postponed

Item 2 - Resolution No. 10-043: Approving a Supplemental Appropriation not to Exceed \$29,960 from the General Fund (Fund 01) Undesignated Fund Balance to the Capital Project Fund (08) for Professional Services in Conducting a Charrette on the Future of the Downtown Railway Corridor

MOVED BY:	Chmielewski	To postpone Resolution No. 10-043 to the August 10, 2010, regular meeting
SECONDED BY:	Brown	

VOTE ON MOTION TO POSTPONE: Carried by unanimous voice vote				
Yes:			No:	
Chmielewski	Erbey	Vanover		
Hanson	Brown	Combs		

Item 3 – City Council Review of City Manager Applications

a. Committee of the Whole

MOVED BY:	Hanson	To enter into a committee of the whole to review the City Manager applications
SECONDED BY:	Vanover	

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

The council entered into the committee of the whole at 7:38 pm and exited at 8:32 pm.

Item 4 - Executive Session: Subjects That Tend to Prejudice the Reputation and Character of any Person – (City Manager applicants)

MOVED BY:	Chmielewski	To enter into Executive Session
SECONDED BY:	Vanover	

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

The council entered into executive session at 8:33 pm and exited 9:08 at pm.

Council Member Chmielewski:

- recommended Mr. Eckert and Mr. Griffin be taken to the next level.

Council Member Brown:

- suggested Mr. Giesbrecht be examined more closely.

Mayor Combs:

- voiced concern regarding Mr. Giesbrecht's ability to work with the state government.

MOVED BY:	Chmielewski	To move Mr. Eckert and Mr. Griffin to the next step in the process
SECONDED BY:	Combs	

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

Primary Amendment #1		
Moved by:	Brown	To add Mr. Stephen Giesbrecht to the list
Seconded by:	Vanover	

Council Member Brown:

- spoke of Mr. Giesbrecht and the desire to further explore his background.

Vote on secondary amendment #1: Carried 4-2				
Yes:			No:	
Erbey	Brown	Vanover	Combs	Chmielewski
Hanson				

Primary Amendment #2		
Moved by:	Chmielewski	To require that background information on the applicants be provided before they are contacted
Seconded by:	Brown	

Discussion ensued regarding background information and resulting delays.

Vote on primary amendment #2: FAILED unanimously			
Yes:		No:	
	Erbey	Brown	Vanover
	Hanson	Combs	Chmielewski

Discussion ensued regarding the use of telephonic interviews.

MOVED BY:	Hanson	To interview and have completed background checks for interviews in August
SECONDED BY:	Brown	

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

F. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the council, the meeting adjourned at 9:38 pm.

Approved this twenty-seventh day of July, 2010.

John C. Combs, Mayor

Janette M. Bower, MMC, City Clerk