

A. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Palmer City Council was held on April 27, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers, Palmer, Alaska.

Mayor Cooper called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL, DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

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

Ken Erbey	Brad Hansen
Tony Pippel	Kathrine Vanover
John Combs	
Jim Cooper	

Also in attendance were the following:

Tom Healy, City Manager
Jack Snodgrass, City Attorney
Janette Persinger, City Clerk

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved with the following amendments:

- Addition of Item K.1: 2004 Crack Sealing Contract
- Addition of Item L.3: Discussion of Eagle Avenue Improvement Project Plans
- Addition of Item M.4: Authorize City Manager to Amend Agreement with Lounsbury & Associates for Design Services for the Palmer Urban Revitalization Project

D. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Hanson.

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Unanimous consent – to approve the amended minutes of the 4-13-04 regular meeting.

F. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Introduction – Ordinance No. 606: Regarding Large Retail Establishments (LREs): Adopting Palmer Municipal Code Section 17.08.047 (Definition of LRE), Amending 17.28.040 (Prohibiting LREs in The Limited Commercial District), Amending Section 17.32.030 (Making LREs a Conditional Use in The General Commercial District), Adopting Section 17.72.055 (Additional Standards for Conditional Use Permit for an LRE), Adopting Section 17.68.065 (Limited Application of Nonconforming Use Status to Existing LREs), and Amending Section 17.72.080 (Appeal)

2. Introduction – Ordinance No. 620: Amending Title 18 (Elections) of the Palmer Municipal Code
3. Introduction – Ordinance No. 621-Z-61: Ratifying the Recommendation of the City of Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission Concerning An Amendment to the Zoning Map Instituted By the Commission to Rezone Tax Parcel 17N02E05B2, 17N02E05B3, 17N02E05B9, 17N02E05A5 From R-1, Single Family Residential to C-G, General Commercial
4. Introduction – Ordinance No. 622-Z-62: Ratifying the Recommendation of the City of Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission Concerning An Amendment to the Zoning Map Instituted By the Commission to Rezone Tax Parcels 18N02E33A2 and 18N02E33D24 From R-1, Single Family Residential to R-2, Multi-Family Residential

G. COMMUNICATIONS AND APPEARANCE REQUESTS

1. Allan Ossakow – Finance Director, City of Palmer
Mr. Ossakow reported on the following items:
 - The finance department is in the process of concluding the audit figures, the final audit will be presented to the council during the second meeting of May;
 - Stated that all of the funds are in good shape and expects a clean audit;
 - The projected general fund revenue is \$3,531,669. \$2,300,149 is listed as undesignated;
 - Provided an explanation of transfers that will affect the general fund;
 - Explained possible adjustments in the 2004 budget;
 - Completed an insurance exposure questionnaire and expects recommendations regarding insurance to be available for the first meeting in June;
 - The banking services agreement will be forwarded to First National Bank in the near future;
 - With the arrival of the IT person, the finance department will begin the process of linking to the network. When the process is complete, Incode will provide on-site training and credit card processing will begin;
 - Highlighted the first financial statements of the year; and
 - Discussion ensued regarding the service projection for 2004, real and personal property taxes and library income.

H. BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT

I. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

1. Loren Rupe – Valley Business Machines
Mr. Rupe explained his business’ operations and stated that his company is in the top four for the State of Alaska contract. He stated that his copier has the potential to save the City over \$800. Mr. Rupe stated he has five local technicians in the Valley and their machine is the only machine with the prescribed printing language for letterheads.

J. HEARINGS, ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Item 1 – Public Hearing – St. John Lutheran Church Request that the City of Palmer Vacate the Portion of South Eklutna Street Between South Elmwood Avenue and East Fireweed Avenue

Mayor Cooper opened the public hearing.

1. David Nueffer spoke in favor of the vacation for the following three reasons:
 - The street is in excess of the city’s needs;
 - Increased safety of the church and community members; and
 - The streets lack of use by the community.
2. Pete Probasco spoke in favor of the vacation and stated that he views the vacation as an enhancement to the church programs. He explained that the church is in the process of expansion and he stated that due to the fact that the street doesn’t extend past the block, the street is not required by the City.
3. Bill Allen spoke in favor of the vacation and stated its importance to the expansion of the church. He explained the future expansion and finances of the church. Mr. Allen stated that the addition will house a large multi-purpose facility that will enhance programs within the community. He explained that when the facility is complete, a safety issue will be presented because the area will be used by the elderly and youth. Mr. Allen expressed the church’s willingness to recognize the easement areas and voiced the churches concern over beautification.

Mayor Cooper closed the public hearing.

City Manager Healy explained the staff’s recommendation and stated that due to the vacation of public property, the decision is of a serious nature. He stated that the property has been developed as a City street and explained the City’s investment in the street. He stated that should the vacation be granted, a significant portion of the vacated land must be retained for easements and due to the area to be retained, the easements may restrict use by the church. City Manager Healy explained the City’s requirement of fair market value for the land and stated that should the vacation be granted, the approximate cost is \$16,000. He stated that the street vacation will not be of significant impact to the City and that not vacating the public street is not of significant impact to the church either. He explained the three recent vacation requests and asked that the council consider a standard for granting street vacations.

Discussion by council regarding the following items ensued:

- The value of the property and the property’s assessment method;
- A variance for the church addition setback;
- A lighted crosswalk and other options to accommodate the safety issues as an alternative to the vacation;
- Traffic control on the church property;
- Costs incurred by the City for the vacation;
- The covered walkway proposed by the church and the design for easement accessibility;
- The setting of street vacation precedence and the lack of a compelling reason to vacate the street;
- Future development in the area and traffic alternatives;
- The zoning of the church property and the required set backs; and
- The timeframe in which the road was developed and the 100% owner financed LID.

MOVED BY:	Vanover	To direct the City Manager to prepare a resolution authoring the vacation of the property for the May 11, 2004 City council meeting
SECONDED BY:	Hanson	

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by 5 – 1voice vote. (Pippel)
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Borough Representative Bill Allen stated that a meeting regarding the federal application for the hospital utility project will be held on April 28, 2004, at the Borough offices. Mr. Allen stated that it is necessary to obligate funds and spend them during the current fiscal year.

Item 2 – Public Hearing – Ordinance No. 617-Z-58: Ratifying the Recommendation of the City of Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission Concerning An Amendment to The Zoning Map Instituted by the Commission to Rezone R.I.P. Subdivision Lot 1B-1, From R-1, Single Family Residential to P, Public

MOVED BY:	Combs	To adopt ordinance no. 617-Z-58
SECONDED BY:	Hanson	

Mayor Cooper opened the public hearing.

There were no members of the public to be heard.

Mayor Cooper closed the public hearing.

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Item 3 – Public Hearing – Ordinance No. 618-Z-59: Ratifying the Recommendation of the City of Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission Concerning An Amendment to The Zoning Map Instituted by the Commission to Rezone Tax Parcels C-3 & C-5, T18N, R2E, S28 From R-1, Single Family Residential to AG, Agricultural

MOVED BY:	Combs	To adopt ordinance no. 618-Z-59
SECONDED BY:	Hanson	

Mayor Cooper opened the public hearing.

There were no members of the public to be heard.

Mayor Cooper closed the public hearing.

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Item 4 – Public Hearing – Ordinance No. 619-Z-60: Ratifying the Recommendation of the City of Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission Concerning An Amendment to The Zoning Map Instituted by the Commission to Rezone Tax Parcels A-10/A-11, T18N, R2E, S32 From R-1, Single Family Residential to C-G, General Commercial

MOVED BY:	Combs	To adopt ordinance no. 619-Z-60
SECONDED BY:	Hanson	

Mayor Cooper opened the public hearing.

There were no members of the public to be heard.

Mayor Cooper closed the public hearing.

Due to a recognized conflict of interest, Council Member Pippel was recused from the discussion and vote on the item.

Discussion ensued regarding the property uses and the recommendations of the Commission. Discussion followed regarding the public process and public notification.

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Item 5 – Resolution No. 1340: Supporting the Matanuska Electric Association (MEA) Sub-Transmission Line

MOVED BY:	Pippel	To adopt resolution no. 1340
SECONDED BY:	Combs	

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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K. BIDS

Item 1 – 2004 Crack Sealing Contract

MOVED BY:	Pippel	To accept the bids of Alaska Sure Seal, Pacific Asphalt and Trailboss and to award the bid to Alaska Sure Seal in amount not to exceed \$11,055
SECONDED BY:	Combs	

Discussion ensued regarding the areas of the community to be sealed by the project and the per pound price.

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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L. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Item 1 – Discussion with Boys & Girls Club Regarding Donation to Boys & Girls Club of Southcentral Alaska

Debbie Thorsen, Boys & Girls Club Program Coordinator stated that during the school year, over 120 students attend the center. During the summer program, 200 students attend the center. Ms. Thorsen explained the programs operated by the center.

Ron Bower, Senior Director of Operations stated that the center has seen an increase of 17% in the total number of students. Mr. Bower explained that the Mat-Su Club is the third largest clubhouse in operation. He stated that the center employs eight full-time staff members and hires three additional employees for the summer. He stated that all employees are locally hired. Mr. Bower explained the budget and stated that 48% of the overall budget is privately funded. The remainder of the funding is achieved by grants. He stated that the center will continue to look at methods to gain additional private funding, with the end result of a 100% privately funded center. Mr. Bower explained the Goose Bay center operations and funding. He stated that the organization would be responsive to the start of a Palmer Clubhouse. Mr. Bower stated that the organization respectfully requests that until such time that a Palmer Clubhouse becomes operational that the City donates \$5000 per year to support the Mat-Su Clubhouse.

Discussion by council regarding the following items ensued:

- Clubhouses located in other parts of Alaska;
- The Mat-Su Clubhouse hours of operation and membership dues;
- The Mat-Su Clubhouse lease;
- The number of Palmer students who attend the Mat-Su Clubhouse; and
- The plans and funding required to begin a clubhouse in Palmer.

MOVED BY:	Combs	To donate \$5,000 to the Boys & Girls Club
SECONDED BY:	Pippel	

Discussion ensued regarding the mode of funding non-profit clubs, the role of the city to provide capital funds and the concern of setting precedence in the way that donations are made to the

public. Discussion followed regarding the under-estimation by the Boys & Girls Club of the overall support of the community to begin a program in Palmer.

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by 4 -2 voice vote (Vanover, Hanson).
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Item 2 – Authorize City Manager to Enter Into or Amend An Agreement Regarding Utilities with the First Baptist Church and Others

MOVED BY:	Pippel	To authorize the city manager to enter into or amend an agreement regarding utilities with the First Baptist Church and others
SECONDED BY:	Erbey	

City Manager Healy and City Attorney Snodgrass explained the changes in the agreement.

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Item 3 – Discussion of Eagle Avenue Improvement Project Plans

Rich Koch, Public Works Director highlighted his memo that provided an explanation of the following:

- A summary of cost estimates for various project scopes;
- A calculation of property owner assessments based on assessment methodology directed by the council for each identified project scope;
- A cost estimate for a project scope that utilizes a surface storm run-off system to the existing piped system at Chugach Street;
- A cost estimate for a project cost that utilizes a piped underground extending from Chugach Street to Second Street; and
- A cost estimate for an additive alternate to include street light standards, lights and load center. The base bid(s) include buried conduit for the lighting system, so that demolition would not be necessary at a later date if the additive alternate is not awarded.

Mr. Koch explained the grade of the road, the run-off caused by the grade and the scope of work to counteract the run-off. Discussion ensued regarding the options of streetlights and the budgeted amounts for the streetlights. Discussion followed regarding the City’s responsibility to complete the project in an appropriate manner.

Council suspended the rules to allow Community Member Cathy Smith, who lives on the corner of Glenn and Eagle, to voice her concerns of the water collected on her property. Mr. Koch addressed the issue and stated that a culvert will be installed on her property.

M. NEW BUSINESS

Item 1 – Authorize City Manager to Enter Into a Joint Purchasing Agreement for the Purchase of an im5520 Digital Copier

MOVED BY:	Combs	To authorize the City Manager to enter into a joint purchasing agreement for the purchase of an im5520 digital copier
SECONDED BY:	Hanson	

City Manager Healy explained the need for the new copy machine and the process of the joint purchasing agreement. Mr. Healy explained the question of the comparison of the machines and the specifications under the State of Alaska bid contract.

M/M by Combs to postpone until the May 11, 2004 City council meeting.
 Seconded by Pippel. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

VOTE ON MOTION:	Postponed
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Item 2 – Discussion of Charter Revisions

Ms. Persinger provided an update of the charter revisions. Ms. Persinger stated that when she began work on the charter revisions she believed that there were a small number of revisions and it was appropriate for she and the attorney to craft the revisions. After further review with Mr. Snodgrass and after determining the numerous amounts of revisions, she determined that input from the council as well as the possible formation of a charter committee is appropriate. She stated that due to the overwhelming needs to change the purchasing and contract section of the charter, work sessions for the purposes of receiving input from the council would be held. She explained that immediately following the October election, the formation a charter committee would begin with the result of all remaining charter revisions to be placed on the October 2005 ballot.

Discussion regarding the need to make the revisions to the procurement and contract sections a priority, the charter committee and the work session schedules followed.

Item 3 – Discussion of Procurement of Old Fashioned Streetlights

Mayor Cooper explained the project and stated that the options of the city for procurement are either sole source or the bid process. Discussion ensued regarding the amount of street lights to be purchased and the placement of the lights. Discussion followed regarding a study of the effect of the type of lighting and the standards of the street lights. Mayor Cooper stated that he would work with the City Manager to author a Request For Proposals for the council to approve.

Item 4 – Authorize City Manager to Amend Agreement with Lounsbury & Associates for Design Services for the Palmer Urban Revitalization Project

MOVED BY:	Pippel	Authorize the city manager to amend the agreement with Lounsbury & Associates for design services for the Palmer Urban Revitalization project in an amount not to exceed \$57,409
SECONDED BY:	Hanson	

City Manager Healy explained the project and mitigation plan required for the completion of the project. Discussion ensued regarding the design work completed by Lounsbury and the additional necessary work.

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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MOVED BY:	Hanson	To extend the meeting past 11:00 p.m.
SECONDED BY:	Pippel	

VOTE ON MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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N. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

O. CITY CLERK’S REPORT

P. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Q. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Vanover explained that Officer Anthony was very active in the promotion of Safe Schools; however, the program is scheduled to be dispatched through the Wasilla Police Department. She stated that during her vacation her husband identified dumpsters that would be effective for the City's use. Ms. Vanover stated that while on vacation she viewed several clever signs and suggested that the City design clever signs for display within the City.

Council Member Pippel inquired as to the status of signage on the side streets and the status of the garbage cans. He reported that his wife has returned home.

Council Member Combs stated that his mom is recovering and doing well. He requested the City Manager or administration to examine the lots on Daron Drive to determine the feasibility of creating a park out of them. Council Member Combs requested that for discussion purposes at the next meeting, the council be provided with the square footage, market value, basic construction plan, available monies and crosswalk information regarding the project.

Mayor Cooper highlighted the meetings he attended while in Juneau and stated that he addressed the Session after the Governor. He commented on the Percent of Market Value (POMV) and the compass piece that he wrote for the paper.

S. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 11:17 p.m.

APPROVED THIS 11th day of May, 2004.

_____/s/_____
Jim Cooper, Mayor

Janette M. Persinger, City Clerk