

CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2003  
7:30 PM - CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

- A. CALL TO ORDER: at 7:30 PM by Mayor Pro-Tem Pippel in Council Chambers.
- B. ROLL CALL, DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM. Present: Council members Vanover, Pippel, Combs, Hanson, and Carrington. Mayor Cooper's absence was excused (on vacation.) Also present: City Manager Tom Healy, Attorney Jack Snodgrass, and Recording Secretary Pam Whitehead. A quorum was established.
- C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was approved as amended. Mayor Pro-Tem Pippel moved New Business item M1, Administer Oath of Office to Brian Fish, to immediately follow item C, Approval of Agenda. There were no objections.
- M. NEW BUSINESS:
  - 1. Administer Oath of Office to Brian Fish.

Newly-appointed Council member Brian Fish was sworn in and seated at the council. Oath of office was administered by Manager Healy.

- D. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: led by Council member Carrington.
- E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 14, 2003 were approved as presented. The minutes of the Special Meeting of January 21, 2003 were approved as presented.

- F. CONSENT AGENDA:
  - 1. Liquor License Renewal – Klondike Mikes' Dancehall and Saloon.
  - 2. Authorize Advertisement for Bids – Two Maintenance Tractors.

MOVED COMBS, SECONDED HANSON to accept the consent agenda. MCU.

- G. COMMUNICATIONS AND APPEARANCE REQUESTS: None.
- H. BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT: None.
- I. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None.

J. HEARINGS, ORDINANCES, AND RESOLUTIONS:

1. Ordinance No. 599 – An Ordinance amending Palmer Municipal Code Subsection 2.08.030(A) (Time of Public Meetings), Changing the Starting Time for Regular Meetings from 7:30 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. (Public Hearing and Second Reading)

This ordinance will change the starting time of regular council meetings from 7:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Pro-Tem Pippel opened the public hearing at 7:35 p.m. and asked for public comment from the audience; none was offered and the meeting was brought back to the council.

MOVED VANOVER, SECONDED COMBS, to adopt Ordinance No. 599. MCU.

2. Resolution No. 1296 – A Resolution of Appreciation for Contributions of Diana Long.

This resolution expresses appreciation for Diana Long's contributions to the City Council and the community.

Mayor Pro-Tem Pippel asked for public comment from the audience on Resolution 1296; none was offered; the meeting was brought back to the council.

MOVED HANSON, SECONDED VANOVER, for adoption of Resolution No. 1296.

Council member Pippel commended the 17-plus years of service by Diana Long to the council and the community; that the resolution is the very least the council could do to honor her.

Question on Motion: MCU.

3. Resolution No. 1297 – A Resolution Authorizing an Application to the Regulatory Commission of Alaska to be Filed Jointly with Eagle Utilities to Transfer a Portion of the City Water Utility Service Area to Eagle Utilities.

Mayor Pro-Tem Pippel asked for public comment from the audience on Resolution 1297; none was offered and the meeting was brought back to the council.

MOVED CARRINGTON, SECONDED HANSON, for adoption of Resolution 1297.

Manager Healy referred council to the resolution, with attached exhibit and map, which outlines the background on this item; reported that Rex Turner of Eagle Utilities has approached the City with a request that the City file jointly with Eagle Utilities an application to the RCA to approve the transfer of a portion of the City's water utility service area to Eagle Utilities so they can expand their current water system to adequately service its customers in Equestrian Acres. The manager recommended approval and emphasized that, *in this case*, it would be more cost effective for Eagle Utilities to provide water service to this area because of the close proximity of its water supply and distribution system to the customers it will serve. He noted that at the point of any future annexation

of the area, the city would not be *required* to take over the water system, that it would be a matter of negotiation between the City and Eagle Utilities if Eagle were to request it. Questions and discussion followed . Council member Hanson inquired if the City had other similar agreements with developments that have community water systems. Mr. Healy will check on it and report back. Council member Combs inquired if the terms of the agreement with Eagle would preclude assessment to Monte Vista and Equestrian Acres for water/sewer if lines are extended after annexation. The attorney raised concern of no power to assess if outside the service district; discussed other issues for the council to consider; suggested more time to review the law and economics behind this resolution for a better report at the next meeting. Council member Hanson voiced concern over having so many jurisdictions within the city's water service district; suggested that in addition to evaluating who assumes liability for the line, that any potential jurisdictional problems upon annexation be evaluated as well. Brief further discussion continued. Council member Pippel would like to receive the answers to the questions raised before proceeding.

MOVED VANOVER, SECONDED CARRINGTON, to table future action on this matter until the next regular meeting.  
MCU.

K.. BIDS: None.

L. OLD BUSINESS: None.

M. NEW BUSINESS.

1. [Moved to earlier in meeting.]

2. Manager Recommendation Regarding Establishing a Special Assessment District for the N. Gulkana St. and Eagle Avenue Improvement Project.

Manager Healy requested direction by the council to make a survey and report (as outlined in the code) on the proposed council-initiated special assessment district; reported that the district involves a project that will construct street improvements on the unpaved portion of N. Gulkana St. from E. Dolphin Ave. to E. Eagle Ave., then on E. Eagle Ave. to the center of the railroad right-of-way. Upon approval, the manager will present the report at the next regular council meeting.

MOVED VANOVER, SECONDED HANSON, to direct the manager to make a survey and report per the code on establishing a Special Assessment District for the N. Gulkana St. and Eagle Avenue Improvement Project.  
MCU.

3. Manager Recommendation Regarding Establishing a Special Assessment District for the N. Valley Way Street Improvement Project.

Manager Healy requested direction by the council to make a survey and report (as outlined in the code) on the proposed council-initiated special assessment district; reported that the district involves a project that will construct improvements on N. Valley Way between Arctic Avenue and E. Eagle Avenue; noted that improvements include replacing the water distribution system and construction of a paved street with curb and gutter and sidewalk; that the street improvement portion will be subject to the special assessment district and the water system improvements will be paid by State grants and loans. Upon approval, the manager will present the report at the next regular council meeting.

MOVED HANSON, SECONDED COMBS, to direct the manager to make a survey and report per the code on establishing a Special Assessment District for the N. Valley Way Street Improvement Project.

Discussion and questions of the manager ensued regarding the N. Valley Way project.

Question on Motion: MCU.

4. Review Draft Palmer Area Transportation Analysis.

Manager Healy reported on his discussions with the ADOT/PF regarding traffic impacts related the proposed Fred Meyer development, which discussions identified the need for a Palmer area transportation plan. He identified the document in the packet as a draft Long Range Palmer Traffic Analysis; noted that ADOT/PF will require this, or similar document, to serve as a planning document in support of future access to the Glenn Highway; that it will assist ADOT/PF in requesting the Federal Highway Administration to allow access to Fred Meyer from the Glenn by virtue of right turn-in and right turn-out lanes. A primary objective of this planning effort is to identify improvements needed to relieve traffic congestion in the downtown area along the Glenn Highway corridor. The Glenn Highway's designation by the FHWA as a limited access highway from south of the W. Evergreen intersection to north of the Arctic intersection is a major issue in a determination whether access to the Glenn Highway by the Fred Meyer development is possible. This planning effort will identify a plan for road improvements in Palmer so that state and federal agencies have assurance that any access to the Glenn that may be granted now is part of a long-term plan. The manager noted that he will also submit the document to P&Z for review and comment. Mr. Healy pointed out a couple of errors on the attached conceptual map, noted that Cobb, Cottonwood, and Evergreen have been identified for improvements; the yellow line at 34 should be removed; emphasized that it is a draft map only and subject to revisions as more information becomes known. Discussion and comment ensued; Mr. Koch participated.

Council member Hanson suggested that someone might research the relationship that Safeway has with DOT as to a traffic light at Ellen St./P-W Highway; suggested also that the Bogard Extension should be included in a long-term comprehensive plan. Council member Vanover agreed that the city should push for the Bogard Extension to connect with E. Scott Road. Council member Pippel spoke to the untenable traffic problems on the East/West crossings across the corridor; suggested

that the long-term solution would be to create alternative routes; that this traffic analysis should probably have been done several years ago; that he is thankful for the Fred Meyer proposal which has brought it to public attention; pointed out that basic growth and development within the areas shown on the map to the west of the Glenn Highway is substantial and growing daily; agreed that the Bogard Extension is critical; noted that the borough is pushing Bogard/Seldon as a major east-west corridor all the way to Pittman; advocated the administration, P&Z, and the council coming up with a serious Palmer transportation plan; expressed hope that the state and federal agencies will recognize our problem and help reach a solution. Brief further questions and discussion continued.

N. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Healy reported:

- See written report on the table covering the following:
  - *Medical Insurance Trust* – he will attend a Trust board meeting on Thursday, where they will review reinsurance quotes, possible plan changes, and set premium rates for the next year; noted the good news of only a 3% increase in premiums.
  - *Population* – The state's annual population determination sets Palmer's population at 5,159, which represents a growth rate of approximately seven percent; spoke briefly to the impact of the population now exceeding 5000 in terms of increased matching funds for DEC grants.
  - *Dispatch* – Informed of an executive committee meeting this Friday on plans for a consolidated dispatch center; will be discussing funding formulas; budget questions (see Wasilla's proposed budget attached to his written report); pointed out the borough's letter proposing certain changes in the dispatch agreement (to which the manager has no objection); noted the borough also proposes to install a Computer Aided Dispatch System in Palmer Dispatch.
  - *Personnel* – The city clerk position applications will close February 21; expects to complete interviews for the finalists for the community development coordinator this week and make a decision by Friday.
  - *Mat-Maid Complex* – see letter to Heritage Properties asking for a proposal involving the water tower and assessments.
  - *Department of Transportation Projects:*
    - State is finalizing plans for paving Airport Road and E. Evergreen this summer;
    - There will be a public open house on the S. Chugach St. proposed improvements on Thursday, January 30, at the Depot from 5-8 p.m.
    - He will meet tomorrow with the project manager for the Urban Revitalization Project; there has been a delay but should have an agreement for council approval at next meeting;
    - He is working with the State traffic engineer to coordinate a traffic analysis related to the proposed Fred Meyer development.
  - *Valley Hospital* – city representatives met with representatives from Triad to discuss utilities for the proposed new hospital; the city is preparing a conceptual utility extension plan and cost estimate to serve the proposed site near the Parks/Glenn Highway intersection. See attached to his written report, information from Valley Hospital on its certificate of need and relevant information; Valley Hospital is requesting letters of support; noted if the council wishes to support VH's application for a certificate of need, he will include an action item on the council's February 11 agenda.
- Questions and brief discussion followed.

O. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None.

P. COUNCIL COMMENTS:

**Council member Vanover:** read an email she received from Mark Hoffman, Principal at Sherrod School, requesting the council to consider hiring more police officers in order to assign a D.A.R.E. officer to the school next year and in the future. Manager Healy briefly explained the D.A.R.E. program; noted that it requires a trained officer, and that the city at one time chose not to participate primarily due to the related cost. Council member Vanover requested information on the program and what it would cost to start it again at Sherrod; that it sounds like a wonderful program and would like to pursue it for informational purposes; that it seems like it would be a good use of monies spent. **Council member Carrington:** commented that he would be interested in looking into the State's population figure for Palmer; noted he is reluctant to trust the State's mathematical calculations.

**Council member Hanson:** welcomed Council member Fish.

**Council member Combs:** commented in support of pursuing the DEC formula regarding the city's population; commented that the time is rapidly approaching where the Glenn Highway corridor will be considered as part of the community as opposed to a pass-through, and that alternatives should be looked at; welcomed Mr. Fish to the council.

**Council member Pippel:** urged attendance at the open house on the Chugach Street improvements at the Palmer Depot on Jan. 30 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Q. ADJOURNMENT: at 8:55 p.m.

*For a signed copy – contact the City Clerk.*