

## A. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Palmer City Council was held on July 23, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Palmer, Alaska. Mayor DeVries called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

## B. ROLL CALL

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

Edna DeVries, Mayor  
Steve Carrington, Deputy Mayor  
Sabrena Combs

Julie Berberich (participated telephonically)  
Linda Combs  
David Fuller (participated telephonically)

Staff in attendance were the following:

Nathan Wallace, City Manager  
Norma I. Alley, MMC, City Clerk

Michael Gatti, City Attorney  
Kara Johnson, Deputy City Clerk

## C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

## D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Approval of Consent Agenda
  - a. **Action Memorandum No. 19-057:** Authorizing the City Manager to Purchase New Beacon AMA Water Meter Reading Software from National Meter and Automation in the Amount of \$15,174.00
  - b. **Action Memorandum No. 19-058:** Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute a Contract with Nodak Electric and Construction, Inc. for the Installation of a 200 AMP Load Center and all Underground Electrical Requirements for Two LED Area Lights with Poured Concrete Base and Pole with Mast Arm in the Amount of \$22,400.00
  - c. **Action Memorandum No. 19-059:** Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate and Enter into a Sole Source Contract with Sherman Technologies, LLC for the Materials, Equipment, and Installation of Two Security Cameras at A-Moosement Park in the Amount of \$22,208.00
  - d. **Action Memorandum No. 19-060:** Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Contract for the Construction of the 2019 Airfield Safety Improvement Project to Dirtworks, Inc. in the Amount of \$858,190.80, Contingent upon Receive a Federal Aviation Administration Grant, and Authorizing the City Manager to Accept and Execute Said Grant from the Federal Aviation Administration for the Airport Improvement Project in the Amount of \$937,980.00 When Offered
2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings
  - a. June 25, 2019, Special Meeting

### Main Motion: To Approve the Agenda, Consent Agenda, and Minutes

Moved by:	S. Combs
Seconded by:	L. Combs
Vote:	6 Yes/1 (Vacant)
Action:	Motion Carried

## E. COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUESTS

1. Presentation from Palmer Museum of History and Art Executive Director Sam Dinges

Mr. Sam Dinges updated City Council on the events and programs held, digitizing their photo collection, and future plans.

## F. REPORTS

1. City Manager's Report

City Manager Wallace highlighted his written report and added the Wastewater Treatment Plant performance had been as expected.

2. City Clerk's Report - None.
3. Mayor's Report

Mayor DeVries highlighted her written report and asked for Palmer Pride Awards nominations.

4. City Attorney's Report - None.

## G. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mr. Stu Graham, Alaska Municipal League (AML) First Vice President, spoke to the importance of AML matters.

Mr. Todd Smolden, Governor Dunleavy's Mat-Su Office Director, provided an update on Governor's Office and summarized current legislative session regarding the budget.

## H. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **Ordinance No. 19-013:** Amending Palmer Municipal Code Chapter 17.44 A-C Airport Commercial District

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing on Ordinance No. 19-013. City Manager Wallace summarized the staff report.

Mr. Richard Best spoke in favor of Ordinance No. 19-013.

Hearing no objection from the Council, Mayor DeVries closed the public hearing.

### Main Motion: To Adopt Ordinance No. 19-013

Moved by:	S. Combs
Seconded by:	L. Combs
Vote:	6 Yes/1 (Vacant)
Action:	Motion Carried

2. **Ordinance No. 19-014:** Amending Palmer Municipal Code Sections 17.89.020 Definitions, 17.89.030 Short-Term Rental Classifications, and 17.89.070 Standards Relating to Short-Term Rentals

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing on Resolution No. 19-014.

Mr. Mike Chmielewski spoke against Resolution No. 19-014.

Hearing no objection from the Council, Mayor DeVries closed the public hearing.

**Main Motion: To Adopt Ordinance No. 19-014**

Moved by:	Carrington
Seconded by:	Fuller
Vote:	6 Yes/1 (Vacant)
Action:	Motion Carried

**I. NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. Committee of the Whole:
  - a. Review of Council Member Applications

The Council entered into a Committee of the Whole at 7:49 p.m.

Mayor DeVries announced Applicant Larry Hill withdrew his name.

City Council reviewed the questions and applicant packets. Consensus was to use the questions as submitted and conduct interviews with Applicant Richard W. Best, Applicant James Cooper, and Applicant Jill Valerius.

Mayor DeVries recapped the selection and appointment process and stated expectations for the evening process.

- b. City Council Member Applicant Interviews

Mayor DeVries opened the floor for questions of the applicants.

Richard W. Best’s interview questions and answers were as follows:

Question: Tell us about yourself.

Mr. Richard W. Best answered he had lived in Palmer since 1999 and has worked the past twenty-five years in the engineering industry. He currently works for the Alaska State Legislator and city of Palmer experience was four and half years on the Planning and Zoning Commission, twelve years on City Council, served on Board of Economic Development, and currently serves on the Airport Advisory Commission.

Question: What do you feel is the most critical issue facing the city of Palmer today?

Mr. Best asked for clarification on the question. Mayor DeVries stated she could not provide further clarification and recommended he answer as best as he could.

Mr. Best stated filling the vacancy was the most critical issue and the position does not give leeway for a learning curve, so due to the short time frame of the position, he was the most qualified amongst the applicants. He added city growth was the biggest issue the City was facing.

Question: What do you think is the most positive attribute of the City?

Mr. Best answered he thought the City had great city managers and government with the culture of the city employees, since he was part of hiring the city manager, city attorney, and city clerk.

Question: Share your assessment of any recent decision of the City Council.

Mr. Best answered he was always someone that talked about process and process was not followed for the new painted crosswalk. The public was not informed or had any input into the installation.

Applicant Jim Cooper's interview questions and answers were as follows:

Question: Tell us about yourself.

Mr. Cooper answered he was born and raised in Palmer, left for military service, him and his wife purchased Just Sew when they returned, and is now retired. He has served the Palmer community with the Chamber of Commerce, Planning & Zoning Commission, City Council as a council member and mayor, President of Alaska Municipal League, Palmer Citizen of the year in 1990, and Chair of Board of Economic Development.

Question: What do you feel is the most critical issue facing the City of Palmer today?

Mr. Cooper answered budget cuts and the four-lane highway were the most critical issues the city was facing. He stated the city needed to continue to be proactive and build on Palmers strengths, which were a sense of community, natural beauty, and quality of life.

Question: What do you think is the most positive attribute of the City?

Mr. Cooper answered Palmer was a great community and had good local events, which personifies the theme of Alaska At Its Best.

Question: Share your assessment of any recent decision of the City Council.

Mr. Cooper answered the Council should had taken a stand on the Governor's budget cuts due to the effect it would have on the City and the Borough.

Applicant Jill Valerius' interview questions and answers were as follows:

Question: Tell us about yourself.

Dr. Valerius answered she owned a local medical practice since 2014 and resided in the state for the last fifteen and half years, moving from Minnesota. She informed the Council the experience she brought was from her physician's standpoint of listening and empowering the community.

Question: What do you feel is the most critical issue facing the City of Palmer today?

Dr. Valerius answered community growth, fiscal responsibility to the community, and continual economic growth.

Question: What do you think is the most positive attribute of the City?

Dr. Valerius answered Palmer has a great history, which is distinguished compared to others.

Question: Share your assessment of any recent decision of the City Council.

Dr. Valerius answered the Council's plastic bag decision, in May 2018, was economic and environmentally friendly.

The Council adjourned from Committee of the Whole and reconvened the Regular Meeting at 8:20 p.m.

## 2. Selection and Appointment of City Council Member

Mayor DeVries opened the floor for nominations for the Interim City Council Member.

Deputy Mayor Carrington nominated Richard W. Best, James Cooper, and Jill Valerius, which was supported by Council Member S. Combs.

Hearing no further nominations Mayor DeVries closed the nominations, requested City Clerk Alley explain the voting process, and called for a vote.

City Clerk Alley explained a vote on the three nominees would be done in alphabetical order by last name. Each member of the Council gets one vote for a nominee. The nominee with a minimum of four votes would be appointed. If there is not a nominee with four votes, there would be a second vote with the nominees with the most votes.

### **First Vote on Nomination: Richard W. Best**

In favor:	Carrington, L. Combs, DeVries
Action:	Not Appointed

### **First Vote on Nomination: James Cooper**

In favor:	No Votes
Action:	Not Appointed

### **First Vote on Nomination: Jill Valerius**

In favor:	Berberich, S. Combs, Fuller
Action:	Not Appointed

City Clerk Alley announced a second vote would be conducted with Mr. Best and Dr. Valerius.

### **Second Vote on Nomination: Richard W. Best**

In favor:	Carrington, L. Combs, DeVries
Action:	Not Appointed

### **Second Vote on Nomination: Jill Valerius**

In favor:	Berberich, S. Combs, Fuller
Action:	Not Appointed

City Clerk Alley announced neither remaining nominees received a majority vote, so no applicant was appointed.

Council Member S. Combs brought forward an additional question through Mayor DeVries for Mr. Best and Dr. Valerius to answer.

Question: Do you feel your current employment or profession would prohibit you from attending council meetings in person on a regular basis?

Mr. Best answered he did not have anything which would prohibit him from attending Council meetings.

Dr. Valerius answered there was nothing about her employment or profession which prohibits her from regularly attending meetings.

Council Member Fuller brought forward two additional questions through Mayor DeVries.

Question: Are you a qualified candidate for the upcoming city council seat election?

Mr. Best stated the question was vague in how it was asked, so the answer would be vague. He answered since the filing period was still open, he had not submitted paperwork yet.

Dr. Valerius answered yes, she was.

Question: Does your current employment create a conflict of interest as a member of the Council?

Mr. Best answered he had his application checked over with legislative's legal and they stated there was not a conflict with his current position.

Dr. Valerius answered no, there was no conflict.

Mayor asked if Council wanted to vote on the two nominees ask more questions or recess.

Mayor DeVries called a recess at 8:37 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:52 p.m.

Council Member L. Combs brought forward an additional question through Mayor DeVries for Mr. Best and Dr. Valerius.

Question: The seat you have applied for consists of 70-77 days of service, what experience in city government do you offer that will make a difference for those 70-77 days?

Mr. Best answered he had twelve plus years on City Council, and a number of those years were served as deputy mayor, four and half years on Planning and Zoning Commission, and is currently serving on the Airport Advisory Commission.

Dr. Valerius answered most of her experience with the city was presenting or coming before the Council when requesting various things. The additional experience she had was from running a business in the City.

Council Member Berberich brought forward an additional question through Mayor DeVries.

Question: What is your feeling on term limits for City Council?

Mr. Best answered the voters are wise enough and with enough acumen to make the right choice as shown by the change in the seats every election in the last few years.

Dr. Valerius answered she is in favor of the term limits because it makes sense to turn things over a bit and grow from change.

Mayor DeVries called for a third vote on Mr. Best and Dr. Valerius.

Hearing no further nominations Mayor DeVries closed the nominations and called for a vote.

**Third Vote on Nomination: Richard W. Best**

In favor:	Carrington, L. Combs, DeVries
Action:	Not Appointed

**Third Vote on Nomination: Jill Valerius**

In favor:	Berberich, S. Combs, Fuller
Action:	Not Appointed

Mayor DeVries asked if there were any additional questions for the nominees.

Council Member L. Combs stated since they had an abundance of applicants, but have conflicting views of the nominees, she requested to postpone the appointment to allow the members of the Council time to review the evening notes.

**Motion to Postpone: The Appointment and Call a Special Meeting on August 6, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.**

Moved by:	L. Combs
Seconded by:	Carrington
Vote:	5 Yes/1 No (S. Combs)/1 (Vacant)
Action:	Motion Carried

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

City Clerk Alley reported the Palmer Municipal Code and applicant questions were the Items Placed on the Table.

**K. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Mike Chmielewski thanked the Council for the installation of the signs at the crosswalk on Alaska Street. He then spoke about the painted crosswalks and highlighted the process of how the community went about appropriating them.

**L. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS**

No direction given to staff for legislation to be placed on a future agenda.

**M. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

**Approved this 10<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2019.**

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Norma I. Alley, MMC, City Clerk

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Edna B. DeVries, Mayor