

## A. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Palmer City Council was held on October 10, 2017, 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  
Sabrena Combs  
David Fuller  
Peter LaFrance

Richard Best, Deputy Mayor  
Steve Carrington  
Brad Hanson

Also in attendance were the following:

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

Michael Gatti, City Attorney (participated telephonically)  
Pamela Whitehead, Minutes Recorder

## C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

## D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Approval of Consent Agenda
  - a. **Action Memorandum No. 17-065:** Authorizing the City Manager to Award and Execute a Contract for Snow Hauling Services to Dirtworks, Incorporated in the Amount of \$67.95 per Hour for Truck and Operator.

### Main Motion: To Approve the Consent Agenda.

Moved by:	Best
Seconded by:	Hanson
Action:	Motion carried
In favor:	LaFrance, Hanson, Fuller, Combs, Carrington, Best, DeVries
Opposed:	None

## E. COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUESTS

**Item 1** – Presentation from Board of Economic Development Chair LaMarr Anderson.

Chairman Anderson:

- Presented the Board's proposed Update to the City's Economic Development Strategic Plan goals and objectives (BED Resolution No. 17-005) with a recommendation to approve;
- Spoke to and encouraged support of the Babb Arboretum development plan created by the Community Arboretum Action Group (BED Resolution 17-004);

- Encouraged expansion of the City's online payment options for City services (BED Resolution 17-006);
- Spoke in support of Livable Communities (supports Goal 11B);
- Spoke to the diversity of the BED members and their passionate connections to Palmer regardless of whether or not they live in the City; and
- Fielded questions from the Council concerning the Strategic Plan Update.

Mayor DeVries spoke in great appreciation for Chairman Anderson's service to the community.

Council Member LaFrance commented in full support of BED Resolution No.s 17-004 and 17-006 and encouraged they come before the Council as soon as possible.

**Item 2 – Presentation from Rachel Greenburg and Stephanie Allen Regarding Livable Communities.**

Rachel Greenberg, Mat-Su Senior Services Executive Director, (also Board Member of the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation); and Stephanie Allen, United Way of Mat-Su Representative, (also Board Member of the Palmer Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Advisory Board):

- Provided a follow-up presentation to the March, 2017, presentation on AARP Livable Communities;
- Described the partnership (Memo of Understanding) between Mat-Su Senior Services and United Way of Mat-Su (Palmer Livable Communities Group) to lead this project;
- Gave an overview of the program and described the domains of livability (see packet);
- Emphasized the program is a nonpartisan and nonpolitical initiative;
- Described the process and spoke to opportunities and methods of assessment;
- Asked the Council for a commitment letter of support, resolution, or proclamation for them to move forward in the process; noted support from the PR&CRAB and BED; and
- Fielded questions from the Council.

Council Members LaFrance, Combs, and Fuller commented in support. Mayor DeVries spoke in agreement with the aspects of livable communities but questioned whether it is nonpolitical related to AARP.

**F. REPORTS**

**Item 1 – City Manager's Report**

City Manager Nathan Wallace:

- Highlighted his written report;
- Reported on the status of City projects, including Wastewater Treatment Plant, Rehabilitation of Airport Runway 16/34 and related Airport improvements, Flight Service Station Heating System Replacement, FSS Interior Improvements, and Bogard Road Booster Station;
- Updated as to status of the Golf Course, MTA Events Center, eligibility for future FAA grant funding, and final budget preparation; and
- Fielded questions from the Council.

**Item 2 – City Clerk's Report**

City Clerk Norma Alley:

- Highlighted her written report; and
- Noted Boards and Commissions appointments will come before the Council for confirmation at the October 24, 2017 meeting.

### Item 3 – Mayor’s Report

Mayor DeVries:

- Highlighted her written report;
- Requested input from the Council regarding applying for the All-American City designation; and
- Deputy Mayor Best asked that the discussion be added to the next Council agenda. Council Member Fuller offered support.

### Item 4 – City Attorney’s Report – None

## G. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Kenni Psenak Linden, former City Council candidate:

- Relayed the concerns of the people she spoke with during the election campaign process, including:
  - Vehicle speeding through residential neighborhoods, specifically behind the Tsunami Warning Center and Valley Trails; residents asking for speed humps;
  - Partnership between the City and the School District to provide more opportunities for youth;
  - Partnership with organizations, like Mat-Su Health Foundation, for resources to address depression, grief, and high rates of suicides, especially among teens, and teen homelessness;
  - Recycling;
  - Fruit tree map;
  - Connecting bikes paths and bike lanes;
  - Promoting trails with tourism;
  - Pedestrian crossing between North and South Valley Way connecting the schools;
  - Better communication from the City regarding roads and Public Works upgrades;
  - Better election notification – some people did not know there was an election coming up; and
  - Term limits, worthy of a community-wide discussion.
- Spoke to her experiences concerning negative campaigning during the recent election;
- Encouraged the Mayor and Council to use their influence to promote future elections as nonpartisan; and
- Congratulated and welcomed new Council Member Sabrena Combs and returning Council Member Brad Hanson.

Jan Newman spoke in strong support for Livable Communities and advocated in favor of a letter that shows the Mayor’s and Council’s support for the efforts of local leaders and the rest of the community to work towards creating an age-friendly community.

Nick Brocket:

- Spoke with regard to liberty and the government’s job to protect, which begins at the local level; and
- Commended this Council for questioning who is going to pay and what regulations would be imposed on the people; noted just because something sounds or looks good, does not necessarily mean it is.

Lorie Koppenberg:

- Noted that while she is totally in favor of making Palmer a livable community, it is very important to recognize what it means and who is involved;
- Her research revealed AARP’s connection to the United Nations and United Way becoming partners through Impact 2030 and that there are livable communities through HUD, DOT, and EPA;
- Warned of possible “hooks” that the Council should fully understand before it commits to support;
- Spoke to doing a livable community at the local level without any Federal government direction; and
- Commented that Palmer has already come a long way in the last 20 years from where it was as a result of local leaders always stepping up to get things done.

Joan Tower:

- Palmer senior who lives near the Senior Center, does not drive, and depends on walking;
- Spoke to snow and ice on the sidewalks in the winter; and
- Advocated for a good neighbor campaign for property owners to keep their sidewalks cleared.

City Clerk Norma Alley read and email from Helen Woodings into the record, commenting in favor and urging the Council to support the Livable Communities plan developed by the World Health Organization and AARP.

Sally Allee commended the City and spoke in great appreciation for the winter snow plowing.

Catherine Hall, Palmer Senior Center Board President:

- Commended the staff and volunteers who participate in the Senior Center and that it is a wonderful place;
- Would like to see Palmer grow for the next generations to come; and
- Spoke in appreciation for the City Council and the work they do.

Mayor Devries called a recess from 8:33 to 8:42 p.m.

## H. PUBLIC HEARINGS

**Item 1 – Resolution No. 17-028:** Amending Resolution No. 17-003: City of Palmer 2017 Fee Schedule by Adding Large Aircraft Transient Tie Down Fee and Specific Aircraft Tie Down Space Fees.

Council Member Fuller requested a staff report. City Manager Wallace explained the proposed amendment in more detail and recommended approval.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing at 8:48 p.m. There being no one in the audience wishing to speak to the issue, and hearing no objection from Council, the public hearing was closed.

City Manager Wallace fielded questions from Council.

### **Main Motion: To Approve Resolution No. 17-028.**

Moved by:	Best
Seconded by:	Hanson
Action:	Motion carried
In favor:	LaFrance, Hanson, Fuller, Combs, Carrington, Best, DeVries
Opposed:	None

**Item 2 – Resolution No. 17-030:** Accepting and Appropriating the 2017 State of Alaska Homeland Security Program Grant 20SHSP-GY17 in the Amount of \$125,000.00 to Partially Fund the Purchase of New Radio Dispatch Consoles for the Palmer Police Department.

City Manager Wallace summarized the City's application for grant funding to purchase new radio and computer aided dispatch equipment, pointing out that this is just to accept and appropriate the grant and not the actual purchase of equipment. He stated additional information in the packet outlines the grant requirements, which the City is capable of fulfilling. City Attorney Gatti spoke in agreement with the Manager's assessment.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

Lori Koppenberg, Palmer Business owner:

- Commended the Council and Chief Ketterling for doing a great job in protecting Palmer;
- Spoke in high appreciation for the police walk-throughs and making sure her employees are safe at night; and
- Encouraged the Council to approve the resolution to give the police department what they need to keep our community safe.

There being no others coming forward to testify, and hearing no objections from the Council, the public hearing was closed.

**Main Motion: To Approve Resolution No. 17-030.**

Moved by:	Best
Seconded by:	Fuller
Action:	Motion carried
In favor:	LaFrance, Hanson, Fuller, Combs, Carrington, Best, DeVries
Opposed:	None

City Manager Wallace and City Attorney Gatti responded to Council questions regarding a timeline for grant requirements and penalties for noncompliance.

Council Member Hanson spoke to this being an ongoing process with ongoing funding; believes it requires a comprehensive budget to keep track.

**I. ACTION MEMORANDA**

**Item 1 – Action Memorandum No. 17-066:** Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute a Contract with the Wolverine Supply, in an Amount Not to Exceed \$97,000.00, to Perform Building Upgrades at the City of Palmer Public Works Maintenance Warehouse.

Council Member Fuller requested a staff report. City Manager Wallace reported the City received a grant from the State for \$150,000.00 for construction upgrades to its Public Works Maintenance Facility; spoke to the bids received and noted the project is fully funded; recommended the action be authorized.

**Main Motion: To Approve Action Memorandum No. 17-066.**

Moved by:	Hanson
Seconded by:	Fuller
Action:	Motion carried
In favor:	LaFrance, Hanson, Fuller, Combs, Carrington, Best, DeVries
Opposed:	None

**Item 2 – Action Memorandum No. 17-067:** Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Contract with EMC Engineering LLC, for Third Party Concrete Strength and Soil Compaction Testing and Additional Control Building and Sitework Inspections of the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Upgrades, in an Amount Not to Exceed \$60,335.00.

Mayor DeVries requested a staff report. City Manager Wallace explained that this is a professional services agreement as opposed to a bid and it is funded through the project. Approval will allow the City to efficiently continue the required activities and keep the project on schedule.

**Main Motion: To Approve Action Memorandum No. 17-067.**

Moved by:	Best
Seconded by:	Fuller

Action:	Motion carried
In favor:	LaFrance, Hanson, Fuller, Combs, Carrington, Best, DeVries
Opposed:	None

**J. NEW BUSINESS**

**Item 1 – Resolution No. 17-031:** Supporting the Naming of an Unnamed Peak Near Mount POW/MIA: Gold Star Peak.

**Main Motion: To Approve Resolution No. 17-031.**

Moved by:	Best
Seconded by:	Hanson
Action:	Motion carried
In favor:	LaFrance, Hanson, Fuller, Combs, Carrington, Best, DeVries
Opposed:	None

Council Member LaFrance commented in complete support of honoring our fallen Veterans in this way and encouraged all who have not hiked there to do so.

Mayor DeVries suspended the rules at 9:14 p.m. to allow Mr. Ackire to speak; there were no objections.

Kirk Alkire, First Sergeant, Retired, U.S. Army:

- Thanked the Council for supporting his proposal, that it means a lot to have the outpouring of support from the City of Palmer and others to honor the families of the fallen.

Mayor DeVries, on behalf of the Council, thanked Mr. Alkire for coming and for his leadership on the project.

The Council returned to regular order of business.

**K. RECORD OF ITEMS PLACED ON THE TABLE - None**

**L. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Stephanie Allen:

- Previous speaker on Livable Communities, provided additional examples of towns similar in population to Palmer and discussed some meaningful things they have done to enhance their communities; and
- Described Golden Shovel awards, shuttle bus services, turning empty parking lots into parklets, walkability districts, community farms, and pop-up temporary colleges.

**M. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS**

Council Member Hanson commented on the Livability information discussed by Lori Koppenburg and asked if she would give it to City Manager Wallace.

Council Member Fuller:

- Spoke in support of the Livability concepts and believes the AARP part is more like a recommendation rather than an affiliation;
- Thinks it could be a benefit for the city to be on the list of Livable Communities; and
- Appreciated the information provided by Kenni Psenak Linden from the campaign trail.

Council Member Combs:

- Echoed the comments of Council Member Fuller regarding Livable Communities, that it is an endorsement that makes our city more attractive;
- Spoke in appreciation of members of our community spearheading these projects and believes that Palmer is filled with volunteers willing to make our community better;
- Commended Mrs. Psenak for coming in and talking about all the issues that she encountered on the campaign trail; noted that she also encountered some of the same; and
- Announced that Palmer High School is playing this weekend.

Council Member LaFrance:

- Thanked everyone who came forward to testify this evening;
- Thanked Mr. Alkire for spearheading the naming of the peak to Gold Star Peak;
- Commented with regard to Livable Communities, recommending that as a board we should be very careful when people come before us, to be welcoming of new ideas; and
- Stated Livable Communities topic deserves to come to the Council for a full up or down vote; asked for a second to support a resolution to come before the Council in the next couple of meetings in order to make a determination on what direction to go.

Deputy Mayor Best:

- Found the Livable Communities conversation interesting, but is still at a loss of what more could be added to our current structure of the boards and commissions and various groups;
- Appreciates the concerns raised about traversing our town; suggested those issues be brought to the Council, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Zoning, and let's try to fix them;
- Commented as funding becomes available we try to address these issues; and
- Stated he did not see the need for a different structure.

**N. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

**Approved this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2018.**

---

Norma I. Alley, MMC, City Clerk

---

Edna B. DeVries, Mayor