



# THE CITY OF WHITTIER

*Gateway to Western Prince William Sound*

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**WHITTIER CITY COUNCIL  
EMERGENCY SPECIAL MEETING  
TUESDAY JUNE 02, 2020  
7:00 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING**

## MINUTES

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

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

### 2. OPENING CEREMONY

Mayor Dave Dickason led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 3. ROLL CALL

**A. Council members present and establishing a quorum:** Peter Denmark, Debra Hicks, Tom Wagner, Victor Shen, David Pinguoch, Monty Irvin, and Dave Dickason

### **B. Administration Present:**

Jim Hunt, City Manager  
Naelene Matsumiya, City Clerk,  
Kris Erchinger, Finance Director  
Andre Achee, Chief of Police  
Dave Borg, Harbormaster

**Others present:** Mike Bender, Kelly Bender, Dan Blair, Chris Pallister and Dave Goldstein

### 4. APPROVAL OF THE EMERGENCY SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

**MOTION:** Victor Shen made a motion to approve the Emergency Special Meeting Agenda

**SECOND:** Monty Irvin

**DISCUSSION:** None

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously

### 5. ORDINANCES

### 6. RESOLUTIONS

**A. Resolution #18-2020-** A Resolution of The City Council Of The City Of Whittier, Alaska Recognizing The City of Whittier has been advised by the USACE District Office that the

total costs of the General Navigation Feature (GNF) may increase from what estimated in the Integrated Feasibility Report (IFR)

Jim Hunt: Okay, we are revisiting the resolution regarding the head of the bay and it's basically just acknowledging as—I'll back up a minute... former Councils, community worksessions we concluded in early feasibility studies and finally in—it was June of 2018, the Corps finished their investigation study for their feasibility at the head of that bay. And in that language, but without a number was that *there could be an increase of our match cost, due to the fact that higher levels of contamination could be found*. Originally, they hadn't put a number to it because it was early on in their studies and the draft. But they came back with a number we could possibly face-- \$4,000,000 additional cost and obviously we couldn't possibly absorb that for our community no matter what happened at the head of the bay in terms of what type of construct and what kind of infrastructure or business. So, it was stated that at any point in recognizing that this wasn't the language from far back and that the city's agreed to it by resolutions and public meetings. But despite this number, the Army Corps asked that, that is a possibility and that's what we're going to be doing tonight with the resolution but also adding in as stated at the first reading of the resolution when it failed was that we have the opportunity to determine as a community whether we want to go forward with his project or not. It could be no additional money, or it could be \$500,000 or \$100,000. There is a loan interest program available, but at this time, where we are, these early stages, they have acquired money for the planning, engineering, and design. And it's during this period, we'll be doing additional drilling into the dredging, soils and runoff coming off the shore. At that point, we'll determine what the cost will be to mitigate that issue. It is also at that point that the public and the Council can make a decision. That is where they are. And as I said before, the Corps is really hyped up on this. Back in Washington, there's not a lot going on here in Alaska. I went back and found a study that was done, I believe it was in 2011/2012 and it was a PowerPoint which we're going to present and it was given to us by the Mayor and it addresses everything we're talking about now; the pros, the cons, the economic feasibility, and what's available for us. I will say from a personal and professional standpoint, I've been watching Whittier for almost 10 years. I considered Whittier competition in my former position. I looked at Valdez, Homer, Cordova and our Finance Director and I, with our great Council, were able to acquit \$85,000,000 and almost no match funds for infrastructure in the community. Every project like this, for any future construction development avoiding sacred cows—whether it was the electric generation plant, new pavings, sewers, new breakwaters, uplands development—had many, many meetings attached to it. Administration followed the community and the Council lead. And that's what I really want to emphasize here. So, as we look at where we are, where we're going the opportunities that are presented to us right here is that nothing happens without the public, without the council giving administration directive. I understand this is new. This is likely one of the largest projects outside of demolishing the Buckner Building that we're going to face for a few years. I'd like Kris to come up—I've got 20 years of experience, about a 3<sup>rd</sup> of it here in Alaska, she's got 30 years of experience in working with communities, maritime infrastructure development planning. Before you speak, Kris, I just want to say, I was talking with the Mayor and thought it was a good idea if we had a Worksession where I brought in somebody from Northern Economics and maybe someone from either PND or RM Engineering, familiar with marine infrastructure and development and the economic impacts and have a big city-wide Worksession and talk about what the City wants. This has been on 3 comprehensive plans, lots of public input.

**MOTION:** Monty Irvin made a motion to adopt Res. #18-2020

**SECOND:** Tom Wagner

**DISCUSSION:** Council discussed the resolution with Jim Hunt and Administration about why it was being brought back. Jim explained that there was a timeline. Council discussed various topics such as fees and previous administration. Monty thank Dan Blair for being a part of this ongoing project.

**VOTE:** Motion passed, 6-1

**7. COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council discussed the following:  
Positive COVID-19 case in Whittier  
Landslide and tsunami threat  
Eastern Aleutian Tribes Clinic involvement in upcoming meetings

**8. CITIZEN'S DISCUSSION**

Dave Goldstein gave a presentation on the Head of the Bay project  
Kelly Bender asked Council to consider the Chambers and existing businesses in Whittier regarding Head of the Bay project.  
Chris Pallister stated his concerns about the Head of the Bay project

**9. COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE TO CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**

None

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

All were in favor of adjourning the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

  
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Naelene Matsumiya  
City Clerk

  
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Dave Dickason  
Mayor