

CALL TO ORDER

The March 15, 2022 regular meeting of the Whittier City Council was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Mayor Dickason.

OPENING CEREMONY

Mayor Dickason led the pledge of allegiance to the flag

ROLL CALL

There were present:

Dave Dickason presiding, and
Dan Blair, Cathy McCord, and Victor Shen,

Tom Wagner- Via Teams

Comprising a quorum of the Board; and
Absent

Peter Denmark, Vice Mayor
David Pinguoch

Also Present

Jim Hunt, City Manager- Via Teams
Jackie C. Wilde, Assistant City Manager- Via Teams
Kris Erchinger, Finance Director
Scott Korbe, Public Works Director
David Borg, Harbormaster
Andre Achee, Police Chief
Holly Wells, City Attorney
Jessica Spuhler, City Attorney

CITIZENS' COMMENTS ON ANY SUBJECT EXCEPT THOSE ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING – Lindsey Hammer with the Prince William Sound Economic Development District, gave information on Resolution 2022-009, regarding the establishing of a network of designated water routes for boaters, kayakers and other outdoor recreators in the sound. Stated there were two components to the project: developing a marine trail guide and the building of 2 new cabins in Salmon Bay and South Ester Island. Mentioned purpose, benefits and funding for this project if approved by the Council.

APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

**Motion (Blair/McCord)
Agenda**

Approval of Agenda and Consent

Approval of the February 22, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion Passed

Unanimous

PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS

Mayor Report--- **Mayor Dickason** reported on the meeting with the Alaska Railroad where they approved the Essential Terms of the lease at the head of the bay. **Dickason** commended Whitter's legal counsel for their efforts in working with administration and the Alaska Railroad for the lease for all the work done in such a short timeframe. Concluded that there is value in the project for the tourism industry in all of Alaska.

Vice Mayor Report- No report

City Manager Report- City Manager Hunt, reported on snow and equipment issues/repairs to the Oshkosh snow blower. City Manager's report included, among other things, Finance Director report and the Water/Wastewater Manager Report.

Assistant City Manager Wilde announced that Emergency Ordinance 2022-001 had expired today meaning Council members would have to start attending meetings in-person and so will the public. Stated that the City is striving for more in-person meetings to be held for better interaction with the City Council and the City Administration with the community and the general public. **Wilde** reported that a grant had been filed the Parks and Recreation Committee. Reported on the Community Easter event that the City will be hosting.

Finance Director Erchinger pointed out highlights in the City Manager's report as well as reiterated what was discussed during the *Committee of the Whole* (No action was taken during *Committee of the Whole*) where Council reviewed the lease that is listed under Agenda Item B-1, Resolution 2022-007. **Erchinger** reported that the City received a notice of the Shared Fisheries Business tax for \$22,152. Explained that the bulk of the "Fish tax" usually comes in November and compared amount to previous year for perspective. **Erchinger** continued and reported on the noticed of payment for the Community Assistance grant; the City is expected to see \$73,072.

Erchinger gave a summary of projects and maintenance for the Public works Department and the Public Works Department.

Harbormaster Borg Reported on Harbor staff discovering electrical issues on F float by one of the pedestals. Power was secured, boats on F float that needed power were moved, and staff investigated. **Borg** stated that upon investigation, it appears that the main cord had been chewed through and was shorting power supply. Breakers didn't throw but they are secured. **Borg** stated that the electrician was called to assess the situation, and he found serious damage. Assumed that the sea otters are the culprit, pretty good possibility. **Borg** reported that this may end up being a broad repair and that they need to inspect the entire float system's wiring as there's some wiring that's been chewed through on E float as well. Cable has been ordered that's being made currently. **Borg** gave options to the Council as to what could hold off the otters from chewing through the cable. Mentioned stainless steel sheathing to fight of chafing and insulation for the sheaths to prevent marine growth.

Public works Director Korbe explained that a main shaft had come apart in the Oshkosh snow blower 3 weeks ago. Stated it was fortunate the issue was detected early on as Oshkosh is now in Anchorage with pending parts for repairs. **Korbe** mentioned that in the meantime, the Idaho Norland is up and running and removing snow around the City. Thanked the community for their cooperation and stated the priority is to open the parking lot across the train tracks for trailers earlier this year (by May 1st) as per an agreement with the property owner. **Korbe** commended the Harbormaster for allowing *Shrimpers* to park in the harbor parking lot in the meantime.

Korbe mentioned contractors visiting the City and assessing damages from the earthquake under

the Earthquake Repair grant. Stated that work that will be done will be crack sealing, storm water catch basin repairs, re-striping parking lots in the harbor etc. Reported that there was an upcoming meeting to discuss the forecast of time and schedule of these repairs (weather dependent). Stated his goal is to have a lot of the work done in the tourist area by June 1st.

Police Chief Achee reported that the Public Safety Department for a NOAA 2021 grant to establish a second tsunami warning center. Reiterated that the grant was submitted, the City is now waiting for a response. **Achee** mentioned search and rescues that the Public Safety and the United States Coast Guard (USGS) cooperated on. Reported that from that, Rueben Garcia and Jeff Lee were acknowledged by the USGS through a presentation and an appreciation ceremony. Commended Rueben Garcia and updated the Council on his accomplishments as he is currently training in Sitka. **Achee** reported that the Whittier Fire/EMS department is doing Emergency Trauma Technician (ETT) now, will end by the end of the month. Reported that the Whittier Public Safety Department is working with the Anchorage Fire Department on Behavioral Health responding and how to approach calls regarding this issue. Training is being hosted in Girdwood. **Achee** reported on the renewal contract for the Ferrovial Law enforcement presence at the Anton Anderson memorial Tunnel set to begin May 1, 2022. Stated that nothing has changed except the CPI increase. Reported on discussions with Ferrovial on the 5% CPI increase. **Achee** reported that it resulted with no issues. **Achee** concluded by addressing the power outage that prevented AT&T cellphones from calling Whittier (472 prefix) land lines. Stated 9-1-1 still works and the issue is being corrected. A secondary line was advertised to the public to reach the public Safety Department.

City Attorney Report- Holly Wells stated that she introduced Jess Spuhler at the last City Council Meeting but wanted to reiterate as Spuhler was the lead on the Alaska Railroad negotiations and the orchestrator from the Birch Horton team. **Wells** gave more words of commendation to Spuhler for all her hard work in that project.

Commission/Committee Reports

Parks & Recreation Committee- Laydown and Minutes from last meeting Provided –

Victor Shen reported on the pop-up event that the Committee held which allowed for snow-shoeing and outdoor recreation. **Shen** stated that because of Whittier's weather pattern, he hopes to see more pop-up events as they are easier. Stated the Committee is working with Jackie Wilde for future events and planning.

PUBLIC HEARINGS (NON-ORDINANCE)- NONE

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES- NONE

Motion (Blair/McCord)

RESOLUTION 2022-007-

Setting Forth And Approving The Terms And Conditions Of A Lease Between The City Of Whittier And The Alaska Railroad Corporation And Authorizing The City Manager To Enter Into All Necessary Agreements With The Parties Incorporating

The Essential Terms Approved In This
Resolution

General discussion was given.

Motion (Blair/McCord)

**Motion To Incorporate The Changes To
The Essential Terms Recommended By
The Administration To Amend Recital G
To State 20 Acres Instead Of 25 And To
Strike All Of Recital J**

AYES: Blair, McCord, Shen, and Dickason.
NAYS: Wagner.

Main Motion Passed

**AMENDED RECITALS TO
RESOLUTION 2022-007-**

Setting Forth And Approving The Terms
And Conditions Of A Lease Between The
City Of Whittier And The Alaska Railroad
Corporation And Authorizing The City
Manager To Enter Into All Necessary
Agreements With The Parties Incorporating
The Essential Terms Approved In This
Resolution

AYES: Blair, McCord, Wagner, Shen, and
Dickason.
NAYS: NONE

Motion (Blair/Shen)

RESOLUTION 2022-008-

A Resolution Of The City Council Of The
City Of Whittier, Alaska, Authorizing
Distribution Of The City Of Whittier
Employee Policy And Procedures Manual

Motion Passed

AYES: Blair, Shen, Wagner, McCord, and
Dickason.
NAYS: NONE

Motion (Wagner/Blair)

RESOLUTION 2022-009-

Stating Support For An Application To The
Economic Development Administration's
American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism,
And Outdoor Recreation Grant Program For
Funds To Develop A Prince William Sound

Marine Trail

General discussion was given.

Motion Passed

AYES: Wagner, Blair, Shen, McCord, and Dickason.

NAYS: NONE

Other New Business Items

C-2 DISCUSSION OF SOA LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVENUE RELIEF GRANT

Finance Director **Erchinger** gave a summary of the grant. Explained flexibility, limitations and examples of what the money can be used for and what it cannot be used for. Answered questions from the Council.

No action taken

C-3 March 29, 2022, 6:00 pm Joint Joint work Session Council, Port and Harbor, and Planning and Zoning Commissions Memo

Assistant City Manager Wilde gave a list of reasons why it is important to get the Boards of the City of Whittier together for a joint work session. Stated that it was important for the Commissions to meet to discuss the future of Whittier in collaboration with the City Council. She explained that the upcoming work session for March 29, will be mandatory for all of Council and Commissioners to discuss the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and discuss priorities with each Commission (Port and Harbor/ Planning and Zoning). **Wilde** explained that from this work session, the Commissions Will have priorities brought to them in a form of a resolution which then will be presented to City Council.

No action taken

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND REPORTS

January 2022 Financial Reports for the City of Whittier, State of Alaska Community Assistance Program Application, Cruise Ship Calendar for 2022, and 1st Annual Community Easter Egg Hunt Public Notice *Please see City Council packet which contains monthly Financial Statements*

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Dan **Blair** commented on the importance of a forward-facing Comprehensive Plan.

Mayor **Dickson** commented on the upcoming Joint Work Session and all the work that can be done between the Council and the Commissions.

Tom **Wagner** commented on Council work with the Huna Totem Corporation and recommended to continue working closely with the Huna Totem Corporation so that “everyone walks away happy” including the community. **Wagner** stated his excitement.

City Manager **Hunt** took this time to thank everyone involved in this project and getting the lease in front of Council and approved.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

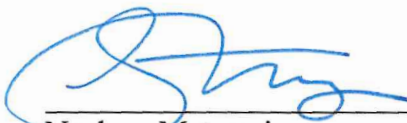
None

COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATION RESPONSE TO CITIZEN COMMENTS

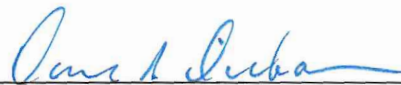
None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.



Naelene Matsumiya
City Clerk



Dave Dickson
Mayor

(City Seal)