

**CITY OF CRAIG
COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 4, 2024**

ROLL CALL

Mayor Kasey Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Present were Shauna Thomas, Josh Bennett, Hannah Bazinet, Millie Schoonover, and Chanel McKinley. Mike Kampnich was present telephonically.

CONSENT AGENDA

Meeting minutes of June 15, 2023

Meeting minutes of March 28, 2024

Ordinance 769, Mike Stewart and Melanie Bergaron Lease D-1 & D-2

MCKINLEY/THOMAS

Motion to adopt the consent agenda.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICIALS

Mayor Smith commented on his recent meeting with the CTA and signed a memorandum of understanding.

Brian Templin, Administrator, submitted a written report. Brian shared that the Administrator Assistant put in her resignation and a candidate for the City Planner position will be visiting Craig on May 2nd and 3rd. Brian reminded the council of the City Council and School Board workshop on April 11th at 6:00 pm. Brian reported that Gretchen nominated Victoria Merritt for an award through the Alaska After School Network and is being recognized as an “outstanding individual who acts as an afterschool super hero in the lives of the youth” and requested council approval to send Victoria to Anchorage to receive the award.

Kimber Mikulecky, Treasurer, submitted a written report.

Mary Salazar, City Clerk, submitted a written report. Council member, Millie Schoonover, commented that she will be absent for the next council meeting.

Venessa Ritcher-Russel, Fire/EMS Coordinator, gave an oral report. Venessa stated she is currently working on an Emergency Planning Grant, a couple of the EMT’s are attending training in Ketchikan, and they have brought on another volunteer EMT. Venessa shared that there is an ammonia training at City Hall on April 9th-11th.

Hans Hjort, Harbormaster, gave an oral report. Hans shared that the boat yard has been busy, the ice house is full, and a soft start for the ice compressor has been installed. Hans shared that there were leaks in North and South Cove, but they were both repaired. Brian Templin commented that Hans saved the city \$30-40,000 by repairing the EMS air compressor.

RJ Ely, Police Chief, submitted a written report. Chief Ely shared that a new officer has been hired, and he will be starting on April 29th.

Oliver Lewis, Public Works/Parks & Public Facilities, submitted a written report. Oliver shared that Doug Ward is back at the Parks & Public Facilities department. Doug and Hans are planning on repairing the cannery point grass.

Gretchen Klein, Recreation, submitted a written report. Council member, Shauna Thomas, commented that the Recreation department did a great job with the Easter Carnival.

Stephanie Merritt, Library, submitted a written report. Stephanie shared that she is collaborating with Spruce Root to host financial wellness workshops starting in October.

READING OF CORRESPONDENCE

Assessors Field Work Letter
PFAS Awareness

NEW BUSINESS

Health Insurance Discussion- Brian Templin addressed workload concerns regarding the City Planner position, proposing that making the Administrative Assistant position full-time could alleviate the issue. He explained that the Administrative Assistant would still be responsible for HR duties, and they would assist the City Planner with grant administration. Brian suggested that discontinuing health insurance for elected officials could fund the full-time position with minimal budget deficit.

Council Member Mike Kampnich noted that the council may have already decided to remove health insurance for elected officials. Council Member Millie Schoonover advocated for keeping health insurance as an option.

Council Member Josh Bennett inquired about the possibility of elected officials waiving their stipend in exchange for health insurance.

Council Member Chanel McKinley supported eliminating health insurance for council members. She also asked about maternity leave policies for city employees. Brian clarified that while the city does not offer maternity leave, employees can use vacation days, sick leave, or have their position saved for 12 weeks unpaid.

MCKINLEY/THOMAS

Motion to write a resolution to have health insurance for elected officials taken off the budget

PASSED BY ROLL CALL VOTE (4-2)

Army Corps Chris Piburn Project South Cove- Council Member Josh Bennett asked how far back the structure is from the rock wall and Chris Piburn replied however far back the engineer decides. Council Member Mike Kampnich asked if they will be using a fabric behind the wall that will prevent erosion and Chris said yes.

BAZINET/MCKINLEY

Motion to direct staff to submit comments to the US Army Corps of Engineers as is
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Sales Tax Survey- Brian Templin presented a draft survey, noting that the school board requested to include a statement from them. He highlighted the potential for a sales tax increase in October, with the option to decrease it later if improvements to the BSA are made by the legislature.

Clinton E. Cook Sr., President of Craig Tribal Association, suggested that lodges out Port Saint Nicholas and Waterfall Lodge should pay sales tax. Brian explained that this would be feasible through borough formation, which could take 3-5 years.

Council Member Chanel McKinley proposed adding a question about senior sales tax exemptions. Mayor Kasey Smith expressed support for the sales tax increase not affecting elders and suggested closing the survey before summer to exclude seasonal residents.

Council Member Mike Kampnich suggested removing the highest tax rates from the survey to avoid public backlash and raised concerns about a seasonal tax's impact on business owners.

Mayor Smith emphasized the necessity of action to support schools and retain their staff. Council Member Josh Bennett stressed transparency in communicating the work of the school board and budget committee, and how city contributions can assist schools.

The council instructed staff to proceed with the survey, incorporating the suggested question.

Senior Property Tax Exemption Application

MCKINLEY/BENNETT

Motion to accept Mr. Demmert's late application
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Pile Driving Contract

BAZINET/THOMAS

Motion to approve the contract with Western Dock and Bridge for an amount to not exceed \$42,000.00 as well as move \$42,000 from the North Cove ramp project to cover this expense
PASSED BY ROLL CALL VOTE (6-0)

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Hannah Bazinet requested USB C chargers for the council iPads at their seats. She also requested a discussion for annexation/borough formation to be on a future meeting agenda.


Council Member Josh Bennett requested to see pricing information for paving to connect Beach Road and Main Street.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 pm.

BAZINET/THOMAS

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



KASEY SMITH
MAYOR, CITY OF CRAIG



MARY SALAZAR
CITY CLERK