

**KENAI CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 17, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.
KENAI CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
210 FIDALGO AVE., KENAI, AK 99611
MAYOR HENRY H. KNACKSTEDT, PRESIDING**

MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the Kenai City Council was held on December 17, 2025, in City Hall Council Chambers, Kenai, AK. Mayor Knackstedt called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Knackstedt led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Star Spangled Banner

The Star-Spangled Banner was performed by Cook Inlet Academy Students Conner West (Tuba) and Braden Mannhardt (Euphonium).

3. Roll Call

There were present:

Henry Knackstedt, Mayor

Sovala Kisenia

Deborah Sounart

Phil Daniel (*remote participation*)

Victoria Askin, Vice Mayor

Bridget Grieme

Glenese Pettey

A quorum was present.

Also in attendance were:

**Josh Bolling, Student Representative

Terry Eubank, City Manager

Scott Bloom, City Attorney

David Swarner, Finance Director

Kevin Buettner, Planning Director

Lee Frey, Public Works Director

Jay Teague, Fire Chief

Dave Ross, Police Chief

Logan Parks, Deputy City Clerk

Shellie Saner, City Clerk

4. Agenda and Consent Agenda Approval

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Askin **MOVED** to approve the agenda and consent agenda. Council Member Pettey **SECONDED** the motion.

The items on the Consent Agenda were read into the record.

Mayor Knackstedt opened the floor for public comment on consent agenda items; there being no one wishing to be heard, the public comment period was closed.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested.

VOTE: There being no objection; **SO ORDERED.**

All items listed with an asterisk () are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the council and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a council member so requests, in which case the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda as part of the General Orders.

B. SCHEDULED ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

1. City of Kenai Community Survey Results, Probolsky Research, Principal Researcher Joshua Emeneger.

Mr. Emeneger presented a comprehensive overview of the community survey results, outlining the methodology, participant demographics and key findings; and reported the following:

- Top Community issue identified jobs, the economy, public safety and transportation.
- High overall satisfaction was reported with quality of life and City services, to include police, fire, emergency services, parks and recreation, library, senior services, water and sewer, and city employee interactions.
- Key priorities identified were infrastructure, economic development and support for local business.
- Mixed satisfaction was identified with land use and growth management, property code compliance, street maintenance and snow and ice removal.
- Housing affordability and availability were identified as ongoing concerns.
- Satisfaction with the value received for tax dollars was identified; opposition to raising local taxes was identified; and preferred funding approaches were recommended such as bed taxes, state and federal grants, selective excise taxes and seasonal sales tax.

2. City of Kenai Public Safety Building Assessment Results, K+A designstudios, Principal Architect Chris Parker.

Mr. Parker provided an overview of the City of Kenai Public Safety Building Assessment Results, outlining the process used to conduct the survey and assess existing conditions; and reported the following:

- Findings included an aging infrastructure, limited ceiling heights, presence of hazardous materials, security and storage deficiencies and upcoming roof replacement needs.
- Fire Department space deficiencies include sleeping quarters, showers, carcinogen separation, exhaust removal, training, administrative and apparatus needs.
- Police Department deficiencies include lobby security, interview space, dispatch capacity, storage, training space, vehicle storage and mechanical system upgrades.
- Additional square footage was needed to support current and future operational needs.
- Presented the four facility options: renovate in place, expand the existing building, construct a new combined station, or construct two separate stations.

[Clerk's Note: Council Member Daniel left the meeting at 6:50 p.m.]

C. SCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENTS - None.

D. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENTS - None.

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **Ordinance No. 3496-2025** - Increasing Estimated Revenues and Appropriations in the General Fund to Provide Supplemental Funding for Utilities and Building Maintenance Costs in Excess of Budgeted Amounts for the Challenger Learning Center. (Administration)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Askin **MOVED** to enact Ordinance No. 3496-2025. Council Member Sounart **SECONDED** the motion.

Mayor Knackstedt opened the floor for public comment. There being no one wishing to be heard, the public comment period was closed.

Appreciation was noted for the work session prior to the regular meeting.

VOTE:

YEA: Grieme, Askin, Pettey, Kisen, Sounart, Knackstedt

NAY: None

ABSENT: Daniel

**Student Representative Bolling: Yea

MOTION PASSED.

2. Resolution No. 2025-70 - Authorizing a Change Order with HDR Engineering, Inc. for Preliminary Design of the Bluff Structure Access Pathways. (Administration)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Askin **MOVED** to adopt Resolution No. 2025-70. Council Member Sounart **SECONDED** the motion.

Mayor Knackstedt opened the floor for public comment. There being no one wishing to be heard, the public comment period was closed.

A summary overview of the memo as attached to Resolution No. 2025-70 was provided. It was reported this would allow HDR Engineering to evaluate the project and provide a 30% design, which would allow the City to determine a cost estimate for the project.

Clarification was provided regarding the proposed number of access points; the intent at this time was for maintenance purposes; and public access could be determined in the future.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested.

VOTE: Motion **APPROVED**, without objection.

3. Resolution No. 2025-71 - Approving a Cooperative Agreement between Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, and the City of Kenai. (Legal)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Askin **MOVED** to adopt Resolution No. 2025-71. Council Member Pettey **SECONDED** the motion.

Mayor Knackstedt opened the floor for public comment. There being no one wishing to be heard, the public comment period was closed.

It was reported that use of Federal funds for this project required the applicant to enter into an agreement with the local governments, or to attempt to enter into an agreement; in order to not be taxed the development could only be used for senior or low-income housing; and the building if used for senior housing would otherwise qualify for the Kenai Peninsula Borough exemption.

There was discussion regarding the benefits of additional senior and low income housing in the City; the loss of property tax revenues; and zoning requirements.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested.

VOTE: Motion **APPROVED**, without objection.

4. **Resolution No. 2025-72** - Requesting the Governor of the State of Alaska Designate by Proclamation the Area of the Upper Cook Inlet East Side Set Net Fishery as an Area Impacted by an Economic Disaster in 2025 and Supporting a Recovery Plan. (Askin and Grieme)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Askin **MOVED** to adopt Resolution No. 2025-72. Council Member Grieme **SECONDED** the motion.

Mayor Knackstedt opened the floor for public comment.

Lisa Gabriel addressed the Council in support of Resolution No. 2025-72, clarified she was representing the Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association, noting the ongoing economic impact of the fishery disaster; the significant revenue losses; provided a summary of limited fishing activities during the season; the importance of past City resolutions in securing disaster relief funding; and thanked the City for their support.

There being no one else wishing to be heard, the public comment period was closed.

There was discussion in support of the resolution, noting similar support from the City in the past; the City received approximately \$78,000 in disaster related funds from the 2018 and 2020 declaration; the broader economic and community impacts of reduced fishing income; and the importance of continued support for the commercial fishing industry.

VOTE:

YEA: Askin, Pettey, Kisenia, Sounart, Knackstedt, Grieme

NAY: None

ABSENT: Daniel

**Student Representative Bolling: Yea

MOTION PASSED.

F. MINUTES

1. *Regular Meeting of December 3, 2025. (City Clerk)

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

1. ***Action/Approval** - Bills to be Ratified. (Administration)

Approved by the consent agenda.

2. ***Action/Approval** - Special Use Permit to TOTE Maritime Alaska, LLC for Truck Trailer Storage. (Administration)

Approved by the consent agenda.

3. ***Ordinance No. 3497- 2025** - Accepting and Appropriating a Donation to the Kenai Community Library for Library Materials, Wayfinding, and Programming. (Administration)

Introduced by the consent agenda and Public Hearing set for January 7, 2026.

4. **Action/Approval** - Mayoral Nominations for Appointments to the Advisory Commissions. (City Clerk)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Askin **MOVED** to confirm the following Mayoral Nominations for appointment to the City of Kenai Advisory Commissions:

Name	Commission	Term
James Bielefeld	Airport	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
James Zirul	Airport	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Sarah Douthit	Beautification	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Kit Hill	Council on Aging	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Barbara Modigh	Council on Aging	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Sharon Fischer	Parks & Recreation	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Heidi Renner	Parks & Recreation	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028

Council Member Sounart **SECONDED** the motion.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested on the motion.

VOTE: Motion **APPROVED**, without objection.

5. Action/Approval - Nominations Received for Council Consideration for Appointment to the Arbitration Panel. (City Clerk)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Askin **MOVED** to confirm the following Employee Nominations for appointment to the Employee Arbitration Panel:

Name	Term
Jerry Nassen	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Terry Turner	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Deborah Myers	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Joan Seaman	December 18, 2025 - December 31, 2026

Council Member Sounart **SECONDED** the motion.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested on the motion.

VOTE: Motion **APPROVED**, without objection.

6. Action/Approval - Mayoral Nominations for Appointment to the Planning & Zoning Commission. (Knackstedt)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Askin **MOVED** to confirm the following Mayoral Nominations for appointment to the City of Kenai Planning & Zoning Commission:

Name	Term
Diane Fikes	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Stacie Krause	January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028
Alexander Douthit	December 18, 2025 - December 31, 2026

Council Member Grieme **SECONDED** the motion.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested on the motion.

VOTE: Motion **APPROVED**, without objection.

I. COMMISSION / COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Council on Aging Commission

No report, next meeting January 8, 2026.

2. Airport Commission

No report, next meeting January 8, 2026

3. Harbor Commission

Public Works Director Frey reported that the Commission met on December 8, 2026 and recommended Council approval of legislation recommending sunseting the Harbor Commission.

4. Parks and Recreation Commission

No report, next meeting February 5, 2026.

5. Planning and Zoning Commission

Council Member Kisenia reported on the December 10, 2025 work session and meeting, next meeting January 14, 2026.

6. Beautification Commission

Council Member Pettet reported on the December 9, 2025 meeting, next meeting January 13, 2026.

J. REPORT OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Knackstedt reported on the following:

- Attending the Alaska Conference of Mayors and Alaska Municipal League conferences.
- Providing opening comments at the meeting of Alaska Federation of Republican Women.
- He wished everyone a Happy Solstice and a Merry Christmas.

K. ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

1. City Manager - City Manager Eubank reported on the following:

- Provided a staffing and recruitment update, welcoming new equipment operator Dawson Shangin; and reported ongoing recruitment for Airport Manager, Building Official and Police Officer.
- Thanked Planning Director Buettner for submitting a Community Development Block Grant application, which would assist with some utility and infrastructure improvements; the Council for the opportunity to attend the Alaska Municipal Managers Association Conference; City staff for the response to the recent high winds; and the Homer Electric Association crews for keeping our community lit and warm.
- Reported working with Elaina Spraker with Senator Sullivan's office for coordinating meetings with federal agencies regarding programs and infrastructure funding.
- Recognized the City employees, noting the survey results show the efforts and quality of the City employees.

2. City Attorney - City Attorney Bloom reported on the following:

- In 2019 the City of Kenai and City of Soldotna were instrumental in starting the Alaska Remote Seller Sales Tax Commission; he had been a board member since the commission started; and he was no longer a board member as he was replaced by City of Kenai Controller Jennifer Anderson.

3. City Clerk - City Clerk Saner reported on the following:

- There were still multiple vacancies on the various commissions of the City.

- Thanked the Council for the opportunity to attend the Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks (AAMC) Conference; and for their support during her term as the Communications Director for AAMC.

L. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Citizen Comments (*Public comments limited to (5) minutes per speaker*) - None.

2. Council Comments

Student Representative Bolling reported on activities and Kenai Central High School, noting a recent drive-in-movie; the Site Council is discussing attendance, sports, capital improvements and standardized testing; and the Strive for 5 attendance initiative has been extremely successful, with higher attendance rates.

Council Member Sounart reported playing and performing with the Kenai Peninsula Orchestra in Kenai and Homer.

Vice Mayor Askin reported attending the conference of the Alaska Mayors and Alaska Municipal League, noting it was encouraging to hear other municipalities were experiencing some of the same issues; thanked the City employees, noting the survey results speak very highly for what Kenai does; and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Council Member Kisena reported that he will be meeting with the high school leadership group; and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Council Member Pettey stated her appreciation for being able to attend the Alaska Municipal League conference; thanked the community members who stepped up to serve on the commissions; and complimented the Triumvirate Theater for their White Christmas show.

Council Member Grieme reported attending the Newly Elected Officials Training and Alaska Municipal League conference; stated the survey results show Kenai is a pretty great place to live and to work; she was looking forward to the basket ball season kicking off; and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

M. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None.

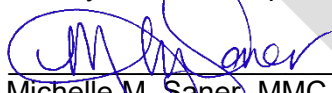
N. PENDING ITEMS - None.

O. ADJOURNMENT

P. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS - None.

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

I certify the above represents accurate minutes of the Kenai City Council meeting of December 17, 2025.



Michelle M. Saner, MMC
City Clerk

**** The student representative may cast advisory votes on all matters except those subject to executive session discussion. Advisory votes will not affect the outcome of the official council vote. Advisory votes will be recorded in the minutes. A student representative may not move or second items during a council meeting.**