

**KENAI CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 16, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.
KENAI CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
210 FIDALGO AVE., KENAI, AK 99611
MAYOR BRIAN GABRIEL, PRESIDING**

MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the Kenai City Council was held on April 16, 2025, in City Hall Council Chambers, Kenai, AK. Mayor Gabriel called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Gabriel led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

There were present:

Brian Gabriel, Mayor	Henry Knackstedt, Vice Mayor
Phil Daniel	Deborah Sounart
Alex Douthit	Victoria Askin
Sovala Kisen	

A quorum was present.

Also in attendance were:

****Xiling Tanner, Student Representative**
Terry Eubank, City Manager
Scott Bloom, City Attorney
David Swarner, Finance Director
Kevin Buettner, Planning Director
Tyler Best, Parks and Recreation Director
Eric Jean, Public Works Assistant Director
Joe Fisher, Building Official
Shellie Saner, City Clerk

3. Agenda and Consent Agenda Approval

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to approve the agenda and consent agenda. Council Member Sounart **SECONDED** the motion.

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

Mayor Gabriel 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. Fiscal Year 2024 Audit Report, Principal Assurance Practice Leader Joy Merriner, BDO USA, LLP.

Ms. Merriner reported on the Fiscal Year 2024 Audit Wrap-up Document, providing an overview of the audit results; review of internal controls; implantation of new Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) regulations; reported in unmodified clean opinion; and encouraged Council to review the Management's Discussion Analysis.

C. SCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Boys and Girls Club of the Kenai Peninsula, Chief Executive Officer Shanette Wik.

Ms. Wik addressed the Council regarding the Teen Center (Center), noting that the local teen attendance is significantly higher than the state and national averages; teens from the Center participate in community services at the Food Bank, Salvation Army and mentoring youth at the clubhouse; and reported the Center operates in a financial deficit; does not charge membership fees; and staff actively seeks additional funding sources.

There was discussion regarding the current activities and future plans for the new campus; the new child care center; three very large class rooms; getting kids ready for life after high school, by teaching life skills with the commercial kitchen, gardens and greenhouse; and opportunities for community members to make donations.

Isabella Shannon, Teen Center participant addressed the Council regarding staff at the Center helping Teens get to know each other; and the positive learning environment at the Center.

2. Central Area Rural Transit System (CARTS), Board of Directors Secretary Linda Hutchings and Executive Director Jessica Schultz.

Tim Dillon, President of the CARTS Board of Directors and Ms. Schultz addressed the Council regarding the change in staffing; provided an overview of services including door-to-door demand transportation; hours of operation; noted the customer fare only covers about 15% of the actual cost of the ride; working with Alaska Cab, who provides additional services when demand exceed CARTS fleet capabilities; in 2024 the program experienced a 21% increase in rides; 66% of the riders are using CARTS to get to and from their jobs; 39% of the drops offs are in Kenai; implementation of a new dispatching software and mobile app; and the being requested this year was \$10,000, which would be used as local match funding.

There was discussion regarding the Kenaitze Indian Tribe transportation program; CARTS assisting with Kenaitze related to ADA transportation; the method used to develop the zone charge fee schedule; and CARTS actively looking at all funding opportunities.

D. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bobby Croom, Sterling resident addressed the Council regarding the KNC Golf, Inc. not offering discounted rates for individuals with disabilities; noting there were discounted rates for individuals who worked on the slope, children and seniors; the increase in season pass fees making the Kenai Golf Course the most expensive on the Peninsula; and provided a summary of the season pass costs at other courses in Alaska.

Samantha Springer, Executive Director of the Kenai Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center addressed the Council noting that the detour from the Spur Hwy was working well; the digital database of artifacts should be ready by summer; and actively looking for grant funding to fix Moose Meat Johns Cabin.

Marion Nelson, Board Member for the Kenai Art Center reported on the upcoming still life show; the Mother's Day Pottery Sale; and she was working with a great team on the Bronze Bear project.

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 1. Ordinance No. 3462-2025** - Accepting and Appropriating Donations to the Kenai Animal Shelter for the Purchase of Equipment and Supplies. (Administration)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to enact Ordinance No. 3462-2025. Council Member Askin **SECONDED** the motion.

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

Gratitude was expressed to the donors.

VOTE:

YEA: Kisená, Gabriel, Daniel, Sounart, Knackstedt, Askin, Douthit

NAY: None

**Student Representative Tanner: Yea

MOTION PASSED.

- 2. Ordinance No. 3463-2025** - Conditionally Donating Certain City Owned Property Described as Three Approximately 1½ Acre Parcels to be Subdivided from a Portion of the Approximately 69½ Acre Parcel Described as Kenai Meadows Addition No 1, Tract A1 According to Plat 2023-48 (KPB Parcel No. 03901067) to Kenai Peninsula Housing Initiative for the Development of Restricted Income and Senior Housing. (Administration)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to enact Ordinance No. 3463-2025. Council Member Sounart **SECONDED** the motion.

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

There was discussion regarding the presentation provided by KPHI during the previous Council meeting; appreciation stated for the private/public partnership; and general excitement for the project.

VOTE:

YEA: Gabriel, Daniel, Sounart, Knackstedt, Askin, Douthit, Kisená

NAY: None

**Student Representative Tanner: Yea

MOTION PASSED.

- 3. Resolution No. 2025-23** - Redirecting Water & Sewer Capital Project Funds to Complete Citywide Lift Station Improvements. (Administration)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to adopt Resolution No. 2025-23. Council Member Askin **SECONDED** the motion.

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

There was discussion regarding other maintenance/improvement items to expect in the future; plans for future improvements; and that full replacement was not needed

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested.

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

4. Resolution No. 2025-24 - Implementing a New Fee for a Truck Fill Station Permit in the Water Fees Section of the Schedule of Rates, Charges and Fees. (Administration)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to adopt Resolution No. 2025-24. Council Member Daniel **SECONDED** the motion.

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

There was discussion regarding this change being driven by Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regulations; inspection requirements; additional costs for contractors for transporting water to job sites; and future considerations for additional Fill Station locations.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested.

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

5. Resolution No. 2025-25 - Authorizing Award of the Contract to Use Cranes, Offices, and Operation Area at the Boating Facility. (Administration)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to adopt Resolution No. 2025-25. Council Member Askin **SECONDED** the motion.

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

It was reported that the agreement was the same as previously approved agreements; it was a non-exclusive agreement; and others could pay a fee to utilize the cranes.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested.

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

6. Resolution No. 2025-26 - Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into an Agreement with the City of Soldotna to Continue Providing Animal Shelter Services for the City of Soldotna at the Kenai Animal Shelter. (Administration)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to adopt Resolution No. 2025-26. Council Member Sounart **SECONDED** the motion.

Mayor Gabriel opened the floor for public comment. 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.**

F. MINUTES

1. *Regular Meeting of April 2, 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 Rebecca Boettcher, DBA: The Fishing Grounds, LLC for Operation of a Snack/Gift Shop Inside the Kenai Municipal Airport. (Administration)

Approved by the consent agenda.

3. ***Action/Approval** - Special Use Permit to the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry for Use of Apron Space at the Kenai Municipal Airport. (Administration)

Approved by the consent agenda.

4. ***Ordinance No. 3464-2025** - Amending Kenai Municipal Code 21.05.085 - Airport Fuel Flowage Fee, to Remove the Set Amount in Code and Instead Refer to the Annually Updated Schedule of Rates, Charges and Fees. (Administration)

Introduced by the consent agenda and Public Hearing set for May 7, 2025.

5. ***Ordinance No. 3465-2025** - Amending Kenai Municipal Code, Title 2 - Alcoholic Beverage and Marijuana, Standardizing How Licenses are Reviewed by the City, Allowing for Administrative Non-Objections for Renewal of Existing Licenses When No Grounds to Object to the Renewal are Identified, Updating Public Hearings for Protests or Conditional Non-Objections, Aligning Municipal Code with Requirements of Alaska Statutes, and Other Housekeeping Amendments. (City Clerk)

Introduced by the consent agenda and Public Hearing set for May 7, 2025.

6. ***Ordinance No. 3466-2025** - Amending Kenai Municipal Code, Chapter 4.32 Residential Code, to Reinstate Provisions Related to Engineered Design and Location, Including Fire Code Protection on Floors Provisions of the 2021 International Residential Code. (Administration)

Introduced by the consent agenda and Public Hearing set for May 7, 2025.

7. ***Ordinance No. 3467-2025** - Accepting and Appropriating a Grant Received Through the Alaska Animal Control Association to the Kenai Animal Shelter for Attendance at the Alaska Animal Control Association 2025 Training Conference. (Administration)

Introduced by the consent agenda and Public Hearing set for May 7, 2025.

8. ***Ordinance No. 3468-2025** - Accepting and Appropriating a Donation to the Kenai Community Library for the Summer Reading Program 2025. (Administration)

Introduced by the consent agenda and Public Hearing set for May 7, 2025.

9. ***Ordinance No. 3469-2025** - Amending KMC 1.85.060-Conflicts of Interest Prohibited, to Allow Municipal Officers and City Employees to Participate in Certain Sales Open to the Public Through a Public Process and Narrowing the Existing Prohibition on Purchases to Personal Property Items. (Douthit)

Introduced by the consent agenda and Public Hearing set for May 7, 2025.

10. **Action/Approval** - Confirmation of Mayoral Nomination for a Partial Term Appointment of Jeanne Reveal to the Planning & Zoning Commission. (Gabriel)

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to confirm the partial term appointment of Jeanne Reveal. Council Member Sounart **SECONDED** the motion.

There was discussion regarding the qualifications of the two applicants and the process utilized when the Mayor selects a nominee.

It was clarified that the Mayor makes the nomination; Council may confirm or not confirm the nominee; and if the nominee is not confirmed the Council may reopen the application period.

VOTE:

YEA: Gabriel, Sounart, Knackstedt, Askin, Kisená

NAY: Daniel, Douthit

**Student Representative Tanner: Yea

MOTION PASSED.

I. COMMISSION / COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Council on Aging Commission

Vice Mayor Knackstedt reported on the April 10, 2025 meeting.

2. Airport Commission

Council Member Daniel reported on the April 10, 2025 meeting.

3. Harbor Commission

Council Member Kisená reported on the April 7, 2025 meeting.

4. Parks and Recreation Commission

Council Member Douthit reported on the April 3, 2025 meeting.

5. Planning and Zoning Commission

No report, next meeting May 14, 2025.

6. Beautification Commission

No quorum present at the April 8, 2025 meeting, next meeting May 13, 2025.

J. REPORT OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Gabriel reported on the following:

- Thanked Finance Director Swarner for his work on the audit, noting that the auditors work for the Council.
- Congratulated AJ Hull, a standout Kenai Central High School athlete who was voted into the High School Hall of Fame.
- Attending the Grand Opening of Debbie's Bistro.
- Reminded everyone of the upcoming Triumvirate Theatre grand opening.
- Wished everyone a Happy Easter.

K. ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

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

- New Firefighter Marcus Lopez starts soon and a second new Firefighter would be starting at the end of May.
- Utility Operator position has been filled; and currently recruiting for a Dispatcher.
- Representatives from Police, Fire, Human Resources, and Parks & Recreation attended the Job Fair, focusing on filling summer positions.
- Storefront Improvement program application deadline extended to May 2.
- The final report from the KPB Tourism Industry Working Group was not adopted, the group would be requesting an extension.

- Meeting with Kenai Peninsula College to discuss the possible use of the Fire Training Center for the Fire and Paramedic Programs.
 - Meeting with Homer Electric Association to discuss impacts to the City related to the potential future gas shortages in Cook Inlet.
 - Bluff Stabilization Project public meeting was rescheduled to April 30, 2025, 6:00 p.m. at the Visitor Center.
 - Recreation Center will be closed Thursday and Friday due to gym floor repairs.
2. City Attorney - No report.
 3. City Clerk - City Clerk Saner reported on the following:
 - Increased activity in the Clerk's Office due to Mobile Food Vendor and Taxi license renewals.

L. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Council Member Douthit reported attending the Job Fair and noted there were more attendees than the previous year, many looking for new jobs; and Soldotna High School brought a busload of 30 students to the Job Fair.

Student Representative Tanner reported that artwork from Connections Homeschool students was now on display in the Soldotna City Council Chambers; Connections upcoming Book Fair; Connection Homeschool wanted to congratulate Connections Student Xiling Tanner for placing first in the State of Alaska TrigStar competition; and provided a schedule of upcoming athletic events for Kenai Central High School.

Council Member Sounart reported that the Ensemble Competition for all Peninsula Students was scheduled for tomorrow at Soldotna High School, she wished all participating students good luck; and wished everyone a happy Holy Week.

Council Member Askin thanked the Finance Department for their hard work and wished everyone a happy Easter.

Council Member Daniel wished everyone a happy Easter.

Vice Mayor Knackstedt thanked Finance Director Swarner and staff for the clean audit; and stated he was looking forward to the Triumvirate Theatre open house.

M. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Review and Discussion of the City Clerk's Evaluation which May be a Subject that Tends to Prejudice the Reputation and Character of the City Clerk [AS 44.62.310(C)(2)].

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to enter into executive session to review and discuss the annual evaluation of the City Clerk which may be a subject that tends to prejudice the reputation and character of the City Clerk. [AS 44.62.310(C)(2)]. Ms. Saner has elected to have the discussion regarding her evaluations take place in executive session. The executive session will include Mayor Gabriel and City Council Members; City Clerk Saner will be included if and when the Council requests her presence.

Council Member Askin **SECONDED** the motion.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested.

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

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Knackstedt **MOVED** to reconvene into regular session. Council Member Askin **SECONDED** the motion.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT was requested.

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

[Clerk's Note: The Council entered into executive session at 8:44 p.m. and reconvened into regular session at 9:34 p.m.]

Vice Mayor Knackstedt reported that the Council entered into executive session and reviewed the City Clerk evaluation with the City Clerk.

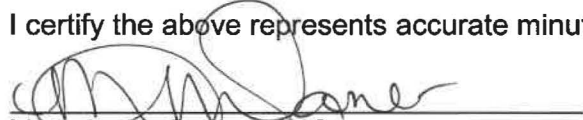
N. PENDING ITEMS - None.

O. ADJOURNMENT

P. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS - None.

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

I certify the above represents accurate minutes of the Kenai City Council meeting of April 16, 2025.


Michelle M. Sauer, 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.**