

**KENAI CITY COUNCIL JOINT WORK SESSION
ELECTIONS
JUNE 18, 2020 – 5:00 P.M.
KENAI CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
210 FIDALGO AVE., KENAI, AK 99611
MAYOR BRIAN GABRIEL, PRESIDING**

NOTES

Council present: B. Gabriel, H. Knackstedt, B. Molloy, R. Peterkin, J. Glendening, G. Pettey, T. Navarre
Others present: City Manager P. Ostrander, City Attorney S. Bloom, City Clerk J. Heinz, Deputy Clerk J. LaPlante

A. Call to Order

Mayor Brian Gabriel called the work session to order at approximately 5:00 p.m.

B. Introduction – Mayor Gabriel

Mayor Gabriel noted the purpose of the work session was to hear about and discuss elections, vote by mail hybrid elections, and Ordinance No. 3127-2020.

C. Presentation Regarding Elections, Vote by Mail Hybrid and Ordinance No. 3127-2020 – City Clerk, Jamie Heinz

The Kenai City Clerk provided a walkthrough of the current voting process, voting percentage comparisons, presented the pros and cons of the traditional process versus vote-by-mail, noted findings and recommendations in the Kenai Peninsula Borough elections feasibility study done to determine if transition to a by-mail hybrid style election was feasible, and thoroughly reviewed Ordinance No. 3127-2020 with proposed changes to the Kenai Municipal Code (KMC).

D. Council Discussion

There was discussion about the feasibility study recommendations for vote by mail hybrid style election, ranked choice voting, moving to appointed areas service boards, consideration of statements advocating for approval or rejections of props, and CDC guidance with vote-by-mail. It was clarified that as recommended in the feasibility study it would be the intent to have a voting center in Soldotna and in Kenai.

It was noted the proposed changes to KMC were based on the combination of reviewing existing code, following the City of Soldotna code format, the Kenai Peninsula Borough code and ordinance, and the Kenai Charter to establish the format and proposed ordinance. It was noted the Kenai City Attorney also briefly reviewed the ordinance.

Inefficiencies of in-person voting along with redundancy with absentee ballots were discussed and the requirement of an ADA machine for each polling center.

It was clarified that a decision regarding who would pay the postage for the returned ballots had not yet been made.

Interest was noted to include a clause in the Ordinance for it to become effective on January 1, 2021 only if the Kenai Peninsula Borough were to go into effect.

Council members expressed interest to have another work session to further develop/refine the ordinance and thanked the City Clerk for the hard work and thoroughness of information provided.

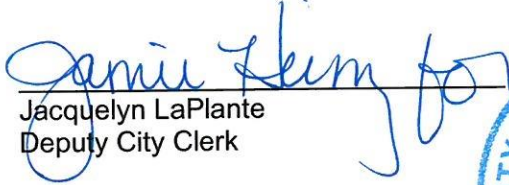
E. **Public Comment** (limited to 3 minutes per individual; 20 minutes aggregate)

None.

F. **Adjournment**

The work session adjourned at approximately 8:24 p.m.

Notes were prepared by:


Jacquelyn LaPlante
Deputy City Clerk

