

Division of Community and Regional Affairs

Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LGIT

05/07/2026



- Types of Meetings
- Purpose of Meetings
- Preparing an Agenda
- Keeping the Minutes



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Authority Starts Here

Where a governing body's power comes from under Alaska law

Article X of the State of Alaska Constitution

§ 1. The purpose of this article is to provide for maximum local self-government with a minimum of local government units, and to prevent duplication of tax-levying jurisdictions. A liberal construction shall be given to the powers of local government units.

§ 2. All local government powers shall be vested in **boroughs and cities**. The State may delegate taxing powers to organized boroughs and cities only.



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

What is a Governing Body in Alaska?

Alaska Constitution, Art. X, §4

- The governing body of the organized **borough** shall be the assembly, and its composition shall be established by law or charter.

Borough → Assembly- The **assembly** decides its own composition and form of representation. AS 29.20.070

Alaska Constitution, Art. X, §8

- The governing body of a **city** shall be the council.

City → Council -Each **first class city** has a council of six members elected by the voters at large. Each **second class city** has a council of seven members elected by the voters at large. The council of a first or second class city may by ordinance provide for election of members other than on an at-large basis for all members. AS 29.20.130



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Structure & Meetings

Alaska Statutes- Sec 29.20.160- Procedures of governing bodies

- **Presiding Officer** — The assembly elects a presiding officer and deputy from its members. In cities, the mayor presides. The deputy steps in when the presiding officer is absent or disqualified.
- **Regular Meetings** — At least one per month, unless changed by ordinance.
- **Special Meetings** — Require 24-hour notice to a majority of members. Notice may be waived in writing, and the waiver must be entered into the journal.



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Purpose of Meetings

Conduct business

This is why an agenda is used and an order of business is followed.

Make decisions

Actions of a governing body are adopted by a majority of the total membership of the body.

Ensure the public's right to know

The final vote of each member on each ordinance, resolution, or substantive motion shall be recorded "yes" or "no", except that if the vote is unanimous, it may be recorded "unanimous".

Allow public input

At least five days before the public hearing, a summary of the ordinances(s) shall be published together with a notice of the time and place for the public hearing.



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Conducting Business

Alaska Statutes- Sec 29.20.160- Procedures of governing bodies. (c-f)

Quorum — A majority of total membership. A disqualified member still counts toward quorum. Without a quorum, the body may only recess or adjourn.

- **Voting** — Actions pass by a majority of total membership. Every member present must vote unless legally required to abstain. Record each vote as "yes" or "no" — or "unanimous" if all agree.
- **Journal (Minutes)** — The body must maintain a journal of official proceedings; it is a public record.
- **Rules of Procedure** — The body may set its own rules and order of business by ordinance.



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Types of Meetings

Regular

A regular meeting is a meeting held at the prescribed time, place, and frequency laid out in code or by-laws.

Special

A special meeting is a meeting held at any time other than the regular meeting.

Emergency

An emergency meeting is a meeting called to order to deal with an emergency.

Work Session

A work session is an informal gathering of the governing body to discuss topics and share information. No decisions or motions shall be made during a work session.



Types of Meetings Continued

Public Hearings

- The purpose of a public hearing is to gather public input on a specific topic.
- Must be reasonably noticed ahead of time with an agenda.
- The governing body opens the public hearing.
- Each member of the public has an equal opportunity to give their opinion on the topic.
- The chair controls the flow of the hearing.



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Creating a Meeting Agenda

- The agenda format may be prescribed by the City Code, Charter, or the governing body's by-laws.
- Review these documents first to determine any required order of business before drafting your agenda.
- At a minimum, every agenda should include the **date, time, location**, and a clear description of each item to be discussed or acted upon.
- If no format is specified, follow a standard order of business: call to order, roll call, approval of minutes, old business, new business, public comment, and adjournment.



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Who Puts Items on the Agenda?

- **Mayor / Presiding Officer** — Sets priorities, submits ordinances, resolutions, and proclamations
- **Municipal Manager / Administrator** — Brings forward administrative business, department reports, contracts, and budget items
- **Assembly or Council Members** — Sponsor ordinances, resolutions, or request items be added to the agenda



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Other Sources of Agenda Items

- **Boards, Commissions & Committees** — Forward recommendations, findings, or referrals to the full body for action
- **The Public** — Citizens may request agenda time for petitions, appeals, or public hearing items as allowed by local rules
- **Statutory & Regulatory Requirements** — Some items must appear by law (e.g., public hearings for zoning changes, budget adoption, liquor license reviews)
- **The Clerk Assembles It All** — Under AS 29.20.380(a)(6), the municipal clerk prepares the agenda and packets as required by the governing body



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Meeting Notices — What's Required?

(AS 29.20.140)

Notice Must Be:

- **Informative** — Include the date, time, location, and type of meeting (regular, special, or emergency)
- **Timely** — Provide reasonable advance notice; special meetings require 24-hour notice to members
- **Consistent** — Follow the posting method described in your municipal ordinances every time
- **The Clerk's Responsibility** — The clerk ensures notice is prepared and posted (AS 29.20.380)



Meeting Notices- Best Practices

- **Post the agenda** to the notice so the public can come prepared
- **Clearly identify public hearings** and what they concern so people know when to show up and speak
- **Post where your community expects** — municipal building, website, social media, post office — and do it the same way every time
 - Consistently posting notices complies with Alaska's Open Meetings Act --AS 44.62.310



Roll call

Approval of agenda

Minutes

Reports

Communications

Old business

New business

Public comments



Changing the Agenda

Can the governing body change the agenda (orders of the day)?

- Yes
- The orders of the day can be suspended or amended by the majority vote of the body.
- A member would make a motion to suspend or amend, and the body votes on it as a whole.

When and for what reasons can it be changed?

Agenda amendments should happen at agenda approval and fall under the following categories:

- To include more information
- To remove information
- To re-order information

The agenda of a special or emergency meeting cannot be amended.



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Conducting Effective Meetings

All Members:

- Be prepared
- Ask questions
- Don't be a single member issue
- Vote unless the body excuses you from voting

Chair:

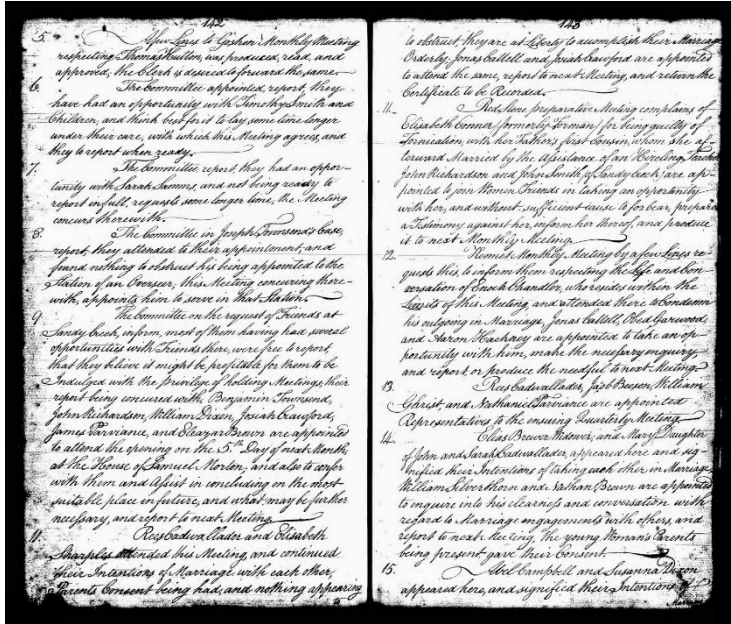
- Give each member an equal opportunity to speak
- Keep order in the meeting
- Protect the rights of the minority
- Respect the wishes of the majority



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Minutes, The Official Journal of Meetings



- Purpose
- Types
- Approval
- Retention



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Purpose of Minutes

Minutes

Meeting minutes are an efficient historical summary of the group's actions and decisions.

What to include:

- Name of the body and the type of meeting.
- Date and place of the meeting (full address.)
- Start time and ending time (adjournment.)
- Members of the body who attended, and members absent/excused (denote who attended telephonically, or if a member was late, what time they joined the meeting.)
- Agenda items from your meeting agenda (as shown in previous slide.)
- Each Motion- including who made the motion.
- The final vote of each motion as approved or failed.
- The final vote of each member on each ordinance, resolution, or substantive motion shall be recorded "yes" or "no", except that if the vote is unanimous, it may be recorded "unanimous".



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Purpose of Minutes

Minutes

Meeting minutes are an efficient historical **summary** of the group's actions and decisions.

What to EXCLUDE:

- Things that didn't happen don't belong in the minutes.
- Detailed Discussions don't belong in the minutes: at most write an efficient summary of a discussion while not getting into the back-and-forth of a conversation.
- Personal Remarks, by members of the body/staff or by the public.
- Statements intended to be “put on the record”- Turning the record of official actions into a platform for personal opinions is not in good form.



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Types of Minutes

Action

A concise record of the meeting's decisions, actions, and any tasks assigned to meeting attendees.

Verbatim

A word-for-word account of the entire meeting.

Summary

A concise and focused summary of the meeting's essential points. This style of minutes is a balance between Action Minutes and Verbatim Minutes.



Minutes of the Kenai City Council Meeting; April 5th, 2023

KENAI CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 5, 2023 – 8:00 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 5, 2023, 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	James Baisden, Vice Mayor
Teesa Winger	Deborah Sounart
Alex Douthit	Victoria Askin
Henry Knackstedt	

A quorum was present.

Also in attendance were:

**Silas Thibodeau, Student Representative
Terry Eubank, City Manager
Scott Bloom, City Attorney
Larry Semmens, Temporary Finance Director
Jessica Hendrickson, Chief Animal Control Officer
Scott Curtin, Public Works Director
Kathy Romain, Senior Center Director
Shellie Saner, City Clerk

3. Agenda Approval

MOTION:

Council Member Knackstedt **MOVED** to approve the agenda with the requested revisions and requested **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**. Vice Mayor Baisden **SECONDED** the motion.

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

4. Consent Agenda

MOTION:

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

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

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**.

City of Kenai Council Meeting
April 5, 2023

Page 1 of 8

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 PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Samantha Springer, Executive Director of the Kenai Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center.

Samantha Spring, new Executive Director of the Kenai Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center introduced herself, stated she was looking forward to working with the City and noted that they were working on a volunteer search to establish a list of volunteers for events; working with the Soldotna Chamber of Commerce toward more joint events; and listed upcoming events.

C. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENTS

What type of minutes are being used?

Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Minutes of the Pelican City Council Meeting; August 9th, 2023

Call to Order - Mayor Patricia Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance - The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call – Mike Allard, Nate Barker, Norm Carson, Jamie Mork and Celeste Weller present. Derek Stewart was available via teleconference.

Welcome Visitors – Emily Jourdan, and Dylan Grafe present. Seth Stewart, Mini Reink, Dylan Grafe, and Kelly Chapman are available via teleconference. *Visitor Comments* – N/A.

Department Heads – *June and July 2023 Water Report provided.*

Lattieca: My packet's a mess, so hold on a second. There really—we have Quintin's June, and his July water report is online. Patty: It's here. Lattieca: Oh, do you guys have that one, too? Patty: I have it. Nate: I have June and here's July. Lattieca: Okay, good. I'm the only one that doesn't have July's, then. Patty: You can have mine. Lattieca: That's okay. I can print one off when I go in. So, since we didn't have the regular meeting in July—Patty: June. Lattieca: You'll have June and July's. There really wasn't a fuel dock update except we were having a fuel barge on—it was supposed to be Friday. But I think now, Raven sent an email out and it's gonna be Saturday. Patty: Oh. Lattieca: So, the fuel barge is gonna be Saturday. Lattieca: I would have to double-check, but I thought it's gonna be in the—like, 5. Celeste: The email said 5 pm. Lattieca: Was it 5 pm? Patty: Oh, 5 pm. Okay. Lattieca: And so yeah. We will be having a fuel barge. For this month. And then the only office report we have—Raven's going to be going to training for the bulk fuel. So, she'll have that training since she's the—I think it's the—the person in charge, with Vance. So, he does the operations of it, and she does the paperwork. And so, she's gonna go and get training as well, for the fuel dock. Patty: The same training, we put Vance through. It's good to have 2 people. It was important that we have somebody have that training. And we're glad Vance did it, and now we'll have a secondary. Lattieca: Yeah. So, there'll be 2 people trained up. And the office hours might be a little wonky while she's gone. But I'm gonna get a schedule set and it'll be posted since I'll be splitting my time while she's doing that. Other than that, I don't think I have anything else at the moment. Patty: We have 2 PUD reports in your packets. Well, they're actually—the August 9th one was on the table, wasn't it? Lattieca: Yes. So, there's a July one, and then there's an August one. Patty: Pretty thorough. If you have questions, you can email Walt. Jamie: Wow. It's amazing to watch the water temperature rise. Versus June to the last day of July. Patty: What did it go to? Jamie: 40.8 to 51.2. Patty: I'm surprised it didn't go higher. Jamie: Yeah. Lattieca: It was really warm there for a while. Patty: Pretty much the mayor has been sending you updates via emails. You should all be getting them. And you know, feel free to, you know, respond, or ask questions. Okay.

Agenda Adoption -

Motion: Jamie: I make a motion to adopt the regular City Council meeting on Wednesday, August 9th, 2023, at 6:00 pm. Nate 2nd. M/C.

Discussion: Patty: Lattieca talked with Shane, and he asked if the blue bunkhouse could be tabled. They're just in peak season and not ready to talk about it. So, we'll move that one to the next meeting, until they get time. Any agenda discussion? Any objections to adopting the agenda as stated? *Agenda adopted.*

What type of minutes are being used?



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Minutes of the Houston City Council Meeting; April 14, 2022

What type of minutes are being used?



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



7. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** Public Hearing(s) (3 minutes per person)

Mayor Thompson opened the Public Hearing for Ordinance 22-02 at 6:07 p.m.

Ordinance 22-02: An Ordinance of Houston City Council Amending the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget by Appropriating \$15,758.00 from the General Account Fund Balance to the Capital Account for the Purpose of Acquiring Ballot Tabulators and Related Equipment for use in City Elections. (Introduced on March 10, 2022 and set to Public Hearing)

A written comment was sent in by the previous Houston City Clerk, Sonya Pevan in support of Ordinance 22-02.

There were no other written or public comments.

Mayor Thompson closed the Public Hearing for Ordinance 22-02 at 6:09 p.m.

MOTION: Deputy Mayor Wilson moved to adopt Ordinance 22-02.

MOTION: Council Member Cole moved to postpone Ordinance 22-02 indefinitely.

DISCUSSION: Discussion ensued.

ACTION: Failed.

YES: Adams, Cole (2)

NO: Wilson, Stout, Thompson, Porter, Brunswick (5)

ABSENT: None

ACTION: Approved

YES: Porter, Brunswick, Thompson, Stout, Wilson (5)

NO: Cole, Adams (2)

ABSENT: None

Mayor Thompson opened the Public Hearing for Ordinance 22-03 at 6:26 p.m.

Ordinance 22-03: An Ordinance of the Houston City Council Amending the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget by Appropriating \$43,883.60 from the General Account Fund Balance to the Capital Account for the purpose of Acquiring Firefighting Turnouts and Related Equipment. (Introduced on March 10, 2022 and set to Public Hearing)

There were no written or public comments.

How Minutes Get Approved

Step 1 — Write The clerk (or designee) drafts minutes during or after the meeting, using notes, recordings, or a template

Step 2 — Staff Review Draft minutes are reviewed internally for accuracy before going public

Step 3 — Place on Agenda The draft minutes are placed on the next meeting's agenda for governing body action

Step 4 — Approve or Amend The governing body votes to approve the minutes as written — or amends them first, then approves

Step 5 — Permanent Record Once approved, minutes become the official journal of the meeting and are **retained permanently** (AS 29.20.160(e))



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Clerk's Role — Keeping the Record

(AS 29.20.380)

- **Attend & Document** — Be present at governing body, board, and committee meetings and keep the official journal (minutes)
- **Record Every Vote** — Each member's vote is recorded as "yes" or "no" — unless unanimous, it may be recorded as "unanimous"
- **Ensure Public Notice Compliance** — Confirm that all meeting notices and public records requirements are met
- **Manage Municipal Records** — Develop retention schedules and procedures for storing and disposing of records
- **Maintain the Permanent File** — Keep an indexed file of all permanent records, codify ordinances, and certify records as needed



Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Questions?

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Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes, Oh My!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT