

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

350 East Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska 99645 - 907-861-8683

BOROUGH MAYOR
Edna DeVries

BOROUGH CLERK
Lonnie R. McKechnie, CMC

BOROUGH MANAGER
Michael Brown

BOROUGH ATTORNEY
Nicholas Spiropoulos



BOROUGH ASSEMBLY
Michael Bowles, District 1
Stephanie Nowers, District 2
Dee McKee, District 3
Maxwell Sumner, District 4
Bill Gamble, District 5
Dmitri Fonov, District 6
Ron Bernier, District 7

MEETING MINUTES

ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS
350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

ASSEMBLY REGULAR MEETING

6:00 PM

TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Edna DeVries.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Assemblymember Michael Bowles, Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Maxwell Sumner, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier

Telephonic: 1 - Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor DeVries queried if there were any changes to the agenda.

Assemblymember Nowers moved a primary amendment to pull Ordinance Serial No. 25-047 from introduction and to take no action.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 2 - Assemblymember McKee and Assemblymember Fonov

Mayor DeVries queried if there were any additional changes to the agenda.
Assemblymember Sumner moved a primary amendment to change the first audience participation from three minutes to two minutes.

Assemblymember Bowles moved a secondary amendment to change both audience participations to two minutes.

The secondary amendment failed by the following vote:

Yes: 1 - Assemblymember Bowles

No: 6 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

The primary amendment failed by the following vote:

Yes: 1 - Assemblymember Sumner

No: 6 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

Mayor DeVries queried if there were any additional changes to the agenda.

The agenda was approved as amended without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Assemblymember McKee.

V. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

There were no minutes of preceding meetings.

VI. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

A. AGENCY REPORTS (MSB 2.12.082; Seven minutes per person)

1. Reports From Cities

There were no reports provided.

2. Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District

Dr. Randy Traini, School District Superintendent, reported on the School District's budget shortfall.

3. State of Alaska

There was no report provided.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Joint Assembly/School Board Committees

There were no reports provided.

2. Assembly Public Relations

There was no report provided.

C. MANAGER COMMENTS

1. State/Federal Legislation

2. Strategic Planning Issues

There was no report provided.

D. ATTORNEY COMMENTS

There was no report provided.

E. CLERK COMMENTS

Ms. McKechnie spoke to the upcoming meeting schedule.

F. CITIZEN AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

26-043

1. Agriculture Advisory Board: 01/21/26
2. Big Lake Community Council: 01/13/26
3. Big Lake RSA Board of Supervisors: 06/09/25, 12/08/25
4. Board of Adjustment and Appeals: 04/30/25, Final Decisions 24-01 and 25-01
5. Butte Community Council: 01/14/26
6. Butte FSA Board of Supervisors: 12/11/25
7. Central Mat-Su Board of Supervisors: 01/12/26
8. Enhanced 911 Advisory Board: 12/09/25
9. Greater Talkeetna RSA Board of Supervisors: 01/08/26
10. North Lakes Community Council: Resolution Nos. 24-002, 25-001, 25-002, 25-003, 26-001, 26-002
11. Platting Board: 01/15/26
12. Transportation Advisory Board: 10/24/25

The citizen and other correspondence were presented, and no comments were noted.

G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS

IM 26-032 Informing The Assembly Of The Managers Signature On Five Grant Applications For Submission To The Alaska State Library For The Alaska Public Library Assistance Grants For The Big Lake, Sutton, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek, and Willow Libraries.

IM 26-040 Reporting Conclusion Of Contract No. 24-088B with Granite Construction Company For a Total Contract Amount Of \$4,268,545.40 For The Hidden Hills And Caswell Lakes Road Improvements Project.

IM 26-042 Reporting The Conclusion Of Contract For Bid No. 23-118B With F-E Contracting, Inc. For A Final Contract Amount Of \$23,915,805.90 To Construct The Mat-Su Central School Project.

The informational memorandums were presented, and no comments were noted.

VII. SPECIAL ORDERS

A. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (You can speak under one of the audience participations on the agenda, but not both; Three Minutes Per Person.)

The following persons spoke to concerns with the School District's proposed budget cuts and in support of full funding: Chris Tyree, Katrina Miller, Lidda Tobin, Heather Bowman, Mark Beck, Sarah Phillips, Chris Angell, Fred Merrill, Carrie Johnson, Taft Johnson, Rebecca Emerson, John Miller, Mayerly Fischer, Alexa Backmen, Travis Friesen, Thom Ohls, Amber Allen, Melissa Brauneis, Mariah Clifford, Carrie Dunphy, Violet Rainbow Brooks, Gary Wolske, Anna Daniel, Stephanie Mellott, Dave Johnson, Tara Lee, and Riley Laws.

The following person spoke in opposition to a sales tax, to lifting weight restrictions on Borough roads, to changing the voting threshold for approval of gas local improvement districts, to leasing land for data centers, and to increases to the salaries of the Assembly and Mayor: Mary Robinson.

The following persons spoke to concerns with pornographic books in Borough libraries: Jackie Goforth and Linda Spohn.

The following persons spoke in opposition to locating data centers in the Borough and to concerns with the noise and water pollution that they cause: Mary Claire McCarthy, Beth Aiken, Shyan Horner, Danielle Benbo, Sheryl McGee, Julianna Pruitt, Caroline Elm, Karina Pettit, and Serena Beck.

The following persons spoke in opposition to any new taxes: Louis Calandri and Mike Alexander.

The following person spoke in support of the Assembly revisiting lifting weight restrictions and noted that the State is unaware of the change that the Borough is making, to concerns with the damage to roads that lifting spring weight restrictions will cause: Joel Stefanski

The following person spoke in support of full funding for the School District and in opposition to the Borough partnering with Terra for a marketing campaign: John Perry.

The following persons spoke in support of reconsideration of Ordinance Serial No. 26-020: Tery Gorlick and Jackie Gorlick.

The following person opined that the Borough needs to establish a natural gas advisory committee: Tom Roberson.

The following person spoke in opposition to locating data centers in the Borough and in support of full funding for the Scholl District: Marika Hintz.

The following person noted that the Tanaina Community Council is seeking a location within their council boundaries to develop into a park: Mary Revetta.

The following person spoke to concerns with how assessments in the Borough are conducted: Dawson White.

The following person spoke in opposition to waiving seasonal weight restrictions on roads, to an increase to the Assembly and Mayor salaries, to any new taxes, to banning books, and in support of full funding for schools: Helen Vincent.

The following persons spoke to the need to audit the School District Administration for waste, in opposition to the cuts that the School District is proposing: Skyler DeBoer and Mary DeBoer.

The following person spoke to the need to fully fund schools and in opposition to data centers and coal mines: Riley Blakenship.

The following person spoke to concerns with the proposed voting threshold for gas local improvement districts: Jesse Sumner.

The meeting recessed at 8:42 p.m. and reconvened at 9 p.m.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Three Minutes Per Person.)

OR 26-022 An Ordinance Authorizing The Manager To Enter Into A Memorandum Of Agreement With The Talkeetna Community Council, Inc. For The Talkeetna Library Pathway Project And Accepting And Appropriating A Grant For Project Implementation.

RS 26-013: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Talkeetna Library Pathway Project.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

There being no one present who wished to testify, the public hearing closed, and discussion moved to the Assembly.

Assemblymember Bernier moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 26-022 and Resolution Serial No. 26-013.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

OR 26-024 An Ordinance Amending MSB 3.15.225 Board Of Equalization; Hearing, Related To Limiting The Board's Authority To Raise Assessments And Making Findings.

Sponsors: Sumner, Bowles and Gamble

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

There being no one present who wished to testify, the public hearing closed, and discussion moved to the Assembly.

Assemblymember Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 26-024.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

OR 26-025 An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$258,328.07 From The United States Geological Survey And \$265,852.19 From The Natural Resources Conservation Service; And Extending The Date Of Completion For Match Funding Through June 30, 2029, For The Collection Of LiDAR Elevation Data.
RS 26-015: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Collection Of LiDAR Elevation Data.
Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

There being no one present who wished to testify, the public hearing closed, and discussion moved to the Assembly.

Assemblymember Bernier moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 26-025 and Resolution Serial No. 26-015.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

OR 26-027 An Ordinance Amending MSB 3.28 To Increase The Property Owner Ballot Threshold For Contiguous Local Improvement Districts From 54 Percent To 75 Percent, And Remove The Provisions That Only Returned Ballots Are Considered In Tabulation.

Sponsors: Nowers and Bowles

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following persons spoke to concerns with the threshold for approving gas local improvement districts: Dave Johnson, Andrew Traxler, and Duane Yung.

Assemblymember Nowers moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 26-027.

Assemblymember Bernier moved to suspend the rules and extend the meeting past 10 p.m. and not to exceed 11:30 p.m.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers,
Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner,
Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and
Assemblymember Bernier

Assemblymember Bowles moved a primary amendment as follows:

*** by striking current Section 4, on page 3 of the ordinance in its entirety;**

*** by inserting in its place: “(d) a ballot with a return envelope addressed to the borough finance department. The ballot shall request the property owner to indicate approval or disapproval of the local improvement district by marking a vote of “yes” or “no” on the ballot, and shall state that the assembly will not proceed with the improvement unless, within 30 days after mailing notice of the public hearing, the borough receives ballots marked “yes” from owners of property bearing 100 percent of the estimated cost of a natural gas distribution line improvement; or more than 75 percent of the estimated cost of any other improvement, except that for noncontiguous improvement districts, the borough must receive ballots marked “yes” from 100 percent of property owners bearing 100 percent of the estimated cost of the improvement.”**

*** by striking current Section 5, on page 4 of the ordinance in its entirety; and**

*** inserting in its place: "(B) The assembly may not proceed with the improvement unless ballots approving a contiguous local improvement district are timely filed by owners of property bearing more than 100 percent of the estimated cost of a natural gas distribution line improvement; or more than 75 percent of the estimated cost of any other improvement; or for a noncontiguous local improvement district, by owners of property bearing 100 percent of the estimated cost of the improvement. If sufficient ballots are not timely filed, the assembly may not proceed with the improvement unless it revises the plan, and a new balloting of owners of property in the local improvement district results in the timely filing of ballots approving the local improvement district by owners of property bearing 100 percent of the estimated cost of a natural gas distribution line improvement; more than 75 percent of the estimated cost of any other improvement; or for a noncontiguous local improvement district, of owners of property bearing 100 percent of the estimated cost of the improvement. A revised plan shall be approved and adopted as an original plan as provided in MSB 3.28.050."**

The primary amendment failed by the following vote:

Yes: 1 - Assemblymember Bowles

No: 6 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

Assemblymember Sumner moved a primary amendment, to Section 5, page 4 of the ordinance, to reinsert the following language: "For contiguous local improvement district proposals, the percentage calculation will be calculated based upon the total number of ballots returned. Unreturned ballots will not affect the calculation."

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 1 - Assemblymember Nowers

Assemblymember Sumner moved a primary amendment by striking "75" and inserting "67" in its place throughout the ordinance.

Assemblymember Fonov moved a secondary amendment by striking "67" and inserting "60" in its place throughout the ordinance.

Assemblymember Sumner called for the question (to stop debate).

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

The secondary amendment failed by the following vote:

Yes: 1 - Assemblymember Fonov

No: 6 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

Assemblymember Sumner called for the question (to stop debate).

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 2 - Assemblymember Bowles and Assemblymember Nowers

The main motion failed as amended by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, and Assemblymember Gamble

No: 4 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (You can speak under one of the audience participations on the agenda, but not both; Three Minutes Per Person.)

The following person spoke to concerns with the marketing partnership outlined in Resolution Serial No. 26-019: Scott Lapine.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. RESOLUTIONS

RS 26-016 A Resolution Approving The Amended Budgets For Birch Creek Tributary At Mastodon Road Fish Passage Project And Neklason Lake At Homebuilt Circle Fish Passage Project.

RS 26-017 A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work And Budget To Reallocate Funds From 2025 Jolly Creek Drainage And Cherrywood Drive, To The 2025 South Horseshoe Lake Road Repairs And Upgrade Project In Big Lake Road Service Area.

RS 26-018 A Resolution Waiving The Fee For A Conditional Use Permit For An Alcoholic Beverage Dispensary.

Sponsors: Gamble

2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

AM 26-016 Award Of Bid No. 26-098B To Nodak Electric & Construction Inc. In The Contract Amount Of \$148,061 To Design And Build A Roof Structure At Port MacKenzie.

AM 26-017 Award Of Bid No. 26-081P To New Horizons Telecom, Inc. In The Contract Amount Of \$555,941.21 To Design And Build A New Telecommunication Tower In Eureka.

AM 26-018 Award Of Bid No. 26-117B To Swickard Auto Group In The Amount Of \$114,534 To Purchase Two Emergency Services 4x4 Sport Utility Vehicles.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Bernier moved to approve the consent agenda as read into the record by the Clerk.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

RS 26-019 A Resolution Supporting A Joint Marketing Effort Between The Borough And Terra Energy Center Corporation For The Promotion And Development Of Designated Borough Lands To Solicit Expressions Of Interest From Large Power Consumers For Data Center, Energy Infrastructure, Advanced Manufacturing, And Industrial Development Opportunities.

Sponsors: Bernier and Fonov

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Bowles moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 26-019.

Assemblymember Bowles called for the question (to stop debate).

The motion failed by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Assemblymember Bowles and Assemblymember Gamble

No: 5 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

Assemblymember Gamble moved to postpone Resolution Serial No. 26-019 to June 2, 2026.

Assemblymember Bernier called for the question (to stop debate).

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 2 - Assemblymember Nowers and Assemblymember Fonov

The motion to postpone failed by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, and Assemblymember Gamble

No: 4 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

Assemblymember Sumner called for the question (to stop debate).

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

The main motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 2 - Assemblymember Bowles and Assemblymember Nowers

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

IX. VETO

There were no vetoes.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 03/17/26, Assembly Chambers)

OR 25-047 An Ordinance Amending MSB 2.08.060 And MSB 2.12.060, Compensation For The Mayor And Assembly.

Sponsors: Fonov

[Clerk's Note: Ordinance Serial No. 25-047 was removed from the agenda at approval of the agenda and not introduced.]

OR 26-023 An Ordinance Approving The Sale Of Certain Borough-Owned Real Property Acquired Through Tax Foreclosure For Delinquent Real Property Tax Years 2019, 2018, And Prior; And Not Needed For A Public Purpose.

OR 26-029 An Ordinance Approving The Purchase Of A One-Acre Parcel Adjacent To The New Gateway Visitor Center In The Amount Of \$172,000 And Classifying The Property As Reserved Use Lands.

OR 26-032 An Ordinance Adopting MSB 1.10.170 And MSB 3.35, 6.5 Percent Areawide Sales Tax, Repealing Areawide Property Tax, And Submitting The Proposition To The Voters At The November 3, 2026, Regular Borough Election.

Sponsors: Bowles

Assemblymember Bernier moved to introduce the legislation as read into the record by the Clerk and to set the public Hearings for March 17, 2026.

Assemblymember Bowles moved to divide the question to take up introduction of Ordinance Serial No. 26-032, Separately.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

FIRST SEGMENT: Assemblymember Bernier moved to introduce the legislation as read into the record by the Clerk and to set the public hearings for March 17, 2026, with the exception of Ordinance Serial No. 26-032

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

SECOND SEGMENT: Assemblymember Bernier moved to introduce Ordinance Serial No. 26-032 and set the public hearing for March 17, 2026.

Assemblymember Bowles moved a primary amendment by striking “March 17, 2026” and inserting “May 19, 2026” in its place.

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

The second segment passed as amended by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

B. MAYORAL NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. VACANCY REPORT

26-044 **Mayoral Requests for Confirmation**

Transportation Advisory Board
Pierce Schwalb

Assemblymember Bernier moved to confirm the appointment requested by the Mayor.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

C. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

none.

D. REFERRALS (For Referral To The Planning Commission For 90 Days Or Other Date Specified By The Assembly)

OR 26-028 An Ordinance Amending MSB 17.80, Nonconforming Structures, To Repeal The Notification Process And Fee Section.

Sponsors: Sumner

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

OR 26-030 An Ordinance Repealing MSB 8.25, Water Pollution Control; And MSB 17.55.020(E), Under Setbacks For Shorelands, In Their Entirety.

Sponsors: Sumner

Assemblymember Sumner moved to refer Ordinance Serial Nos. 26-028 and 26-030 to the Planning Commission for 90 days.

Assemblymember Nowers moved divide the question to take up the referral of Ordinance Serial No. 26-030, separately.

The motion passed by the following vote:

FIRST SEGMENT: Assemblymember Sumner moved to refer Ordinance Serial No. 26-028 to the Planning Commission for 90 days.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

SECOND SEGMENT: Assemblymember Nowers moved to refer Ordinance Serial No. 26-032 to the Planning Commission for 90 days.

Assemblymember Sumner moved a primary amendment to include referral to the Wastewater Advisory Board for 90 days.

Assemblymember Nowers moved a secondary amendment to strike the referral of 90 days and for the legislation not to come back to the Assembly until June 16, 2026.

The secondary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

The primary amendment passed as amended by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

SECOND SEGMENT: The second segment passed as amended by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

XI. RECONSIDERATION

OR 26-020 An Ordinance Establishing An Exemption To Weight Restrictions On Borough Roads.
RS 26-010: A Resolution Establishing A Fee For Processing Requests For An Exemption To Weight Restrictions On Borough Roads.

Sponsors: McKee and Fonov

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Gamble moved to reconsider Ordinance Serial No. 26-020.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, and Assemblymember Gamble

No: 4 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

XII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Assemblymember McKee opined that Ordinance Serial No. 25-047 should be brought back for discussion regarding potential increases to the Assembly and Mayor's salaries.

Assemblymember Sumner stated that he listened intently to all testimony provided. Noted that people generally dislike taxes and that budget decisions can be difficult. Spoke to the need for the Assembly to be good stewards of others' money.

Assemblymember Bernier thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Said a prayer.

Assemblymember Nowers spoke to concerns with possible damage to roads with the lifting of seasonal weight restrictions. Stated that repairs to the roads will be at the expense of taxpayers. Noted that she read all the public opinion comments that were provided regarding school district funding concerns. Opined that teachers are doing a great job on behalf of students. Stated that funding the School District is a tough situation that cannot be minimized. Noted that if the Assembly were to fund the school district to the cap that it would be an additional \$600 per year burden on property taxpayers. Commented that she does not want to see any school closed as she can envision the long-term impacts of doing so. Opined that now is not the time for the body to discuss giving themselves a pay increase when there are more important funding concerns.

Assemblymember Fonov thanked the body for their patience while he attended the meeting telephonically. Stated that he does not want to see any schools closed but acknowledged that the discussion may be unavoidable. Spoke in support of lifting seasonal weight restrictions. Stated that he is disappointed that Ordinance Serial No. 25-047 was removed from the agenda. Opined that it is time for the Assembly to have a pay increase.

Assemblymember Bowles moved reconsider the removal of Ordinance Serial No. 25-047 from the agenda.

Assemblymember Bowles moved to withdraw his motion.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Assemblymember McKee and Assemblymember Fonov

**No: 5 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers,
Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and
Assemblymember Bernier**

Assemblymember Bowles spoke in opposition to data centers. Spoke to the need for the body to focus on industry that will not pollute the environment or infringe on private property rights.

Assemblymember Gamble noted that the State still has seasonal road weight restrictions and that the Borough only has the authority to lift them on roads under its purview. Commented that it could be a problem for contractors who have paid the Borough fee to travel unrestricted on Borough roads, but noted that those same contractors will still have to travel on weight-restricted roads under the purview of the State and could be fined. Commented that he has always been in opposition to the Borough assisting with funding gas line extensions for Enstar. Opined that the company should extend main lines at its own expense and not at the expense of residents. Stated that he is not opposed to data centers as long as they are appropriately located. Spoke in support of job growth and attracting business to the Borough.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting recessed at 11:24 p.m.



Mayoral Signature and Clerk Attestment
For
March 3, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes
(20 pages)


EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 03/17/26