

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, SEPTEMBER 2, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, 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 Tim Hale, Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Maxwell Sumner, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, and Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov

Excused: 1 - Assemblymember Ron Bernier

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mike Brown, Borough Manager, requested to pull Ordinance Serial No. 25-066 from introduction. Stated that the intent is to bring it back for introduction at a later meeting.

Mayor DeVries queried if there was any objection.

There was no objection noted and the agenda was approved as amended.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Wasilla City Council Member Catherine Cottle.

V. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

[25-127](#)

A. Special Assembly Meeting Minutes: 08/02/25

B. Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes: 08/05/25

The minutes were approved as presented without objection.

VI. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

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

1. Reports From Cities

There was no report provided.

2. Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District

There was no report provided.

3. State of Alaska

There was no report provided.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Joint Assembly/School Board Committees

Assemblymembers Nowers and Gamble reported on the most recent meeting of the Committee.

2. Assembly Public Relations

There were no reports provided.

C. MANAGER COMMENTS

1. State/Federal Legislation

2. Strategic Planning Issues

Ken Barkley, Emergency Services Director, reported on the most recent flooding concerns and current flood advisories.

D. ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Mr. Spiropoulos advised that he has requested an executive session be added to the September 16, 2025, regular meeting agenda regarding the MV Susitna project.

E. CLERK COMMENTS

Ms. McKechnie spoke to the upcoming meeting schedule and pertinent election dates. Stated that the Joint Assembly/School Board meeting scheduled for September 9, 2025, will be held at the School District Administration Building.

F. CITIZEN AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

[25-128](#)

1. Agriculture Advisory Board: 05/21/25
2. Enhanced 911 Advisory Board: 06/10/25
3. Gold Trail RSA Board of Supervisors: 06/25/25
4. Greater Talkeetna RSA Board of Supervisors: 07/10/25
5. Library Board: 05/13/25
6. Library Citizens' Advisory Board: 05/12/25
7. Planning Commission: 08/04/25
8. Platting Board: 07/17/25
9. South Lakes Community Council: 08/04/25
10. Susitna Community Council: 05/01/25
11. Trapper Creek RSA Board of Supervisors: 11/06/24, 02/26/25, 07/02/25,
12. West Lakes FSA Board of Supervisors: 05/12/25, 07/14/25

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

G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS

[IM 25-171](#)

Reporting Conclusion Of Contract No. 24-097B with Dirtworks, Inc. For a Total Contract Amount Of \$774,908.62, For The Jupiter Avenue and Diana Avenue Road Improvements Project.

[IM 25-180](#)

Informing The Assembly Of The Managers Signature On Five Grant Applications For The Online With Libraries Grants Through The Alaska State Library.

[IM 25-193](#)

Informing The Assembly That The Community Development Department Has Applied For A Grant From Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation For The Government Peak Recreation Area.

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 person spoke to concerns with the increase of property taxes, to concerns with the proposed gas excise tax, and to the need to diversify the tax base: Scott Lindbloom.

The following person spoke in support of AM 25-110: Rod Hanson, North Lakes Community Council.

The following person spoke to concerns with voting precincts being located at schools: Tom Roberson.

The following person spoke to concerns with librarians determining what books are in libraries: Jackie Goforth and Linda Spohn.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Three Minutes Per Person.)

[OR 25-091](#) An Ordinance Naming The Big Lake Facility The Big Lake Lions Recreation Center.

Sponsors: 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 Gamble moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 25-091.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Fonov

[OR 25-094](#)

An Ordinance Reappropriating National Opioid Settlement Funding Totaling \$21,000 For The Department Of Emergency Services Peer Support Training Program.

RS 25-080: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Department Of Emergency Services Peer Support Training Program.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Cheyenne Heindel, Finance Director, provided a staff report.

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 Hale moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 25-094.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Fonov

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

There was no one present who wished to testify.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. RESOLUTIONS

2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

[AM 25-106](#)

An Approval Of Change Order No. 5 For Contract No. 24-157(B) With Orion Construction, Inc. To Add \$50,490.36 To Relocate The X-Ray Machine, Install A Wet Table, And Relocate The Water Tanks For The Animal Care Upgrades Project.

[AM 25-111](#)

Award Of Bid No. 26-029B To NC Machinery In The Contract Amount Of \$195,410 To Purchase A Waste Handler Loader.

[AM 25-112](#) Award Of Bid No. 26-041Q To The Boutet Company, Inc. In The Amount Of \$102,025 For North Doubloon Drive, West Cove Drive, West Jolly Roger Drive, And West Captain Kidd Avenue Improvements.

[AM 25-113](#) Award Of Proposal No. 25-175P To PND Engineers, Inc. In The Contract Amount Of \$353,979 To Provide Jonesville Shooting Park Professional Services.

[AM 25-114](#) Approval Of Election Officials For The November 4, 2025, Regular Borough Election.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

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

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

[RS 25-083](#) A Resolution Approving The Amended Budget For 2024 Transportation System Projects, By Reallocating \$496,256 From The Skeetawk Bus Access Road Project, To The Echo Lake Drive Improvements Project.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember McKee moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 25-083.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Fonov

[AM 25-110](#) Approval Of Change Order No. 6 For Contract No. 22-104P(C) With Dowl, LLC. To Add \$790,622 For The Shaw Elementary Turn Lane Project; And To Extend The Contract To December 1, 2028.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember McKee moved to adopt AM No. 25-110.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Fonov

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

IX. VETO

There were no vetoes.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 09/16/25, Assembly Chambers)

[OR 25-066](#) An Ordinance Amending MSB 17.23, Port Mackenzie Special Use District, Repealing The Port Development Permit And Associated Standards.

Sponsors: Gamble

[Clerk's Note: Ordinance Serial No. 25-066 was pulled from introduction to be introduced at a later date.]

[OR 25-073](#) An Ordinance Amending MSB 17.02, Mandatory Land Use Permit; MSB 17.55, Setback And Screening Easements; MSB 17.65, Variances; MSB 17.80, Nonconforming Structures; And MSB 17.125, Definitions.

Sponsors: Hale

[OR 25-085](#) An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating A Grant In The Amount Of \$44,000 From The Alaska State Department Of Health And Social Services, For The Continued Management Of Points Of Dispensing And Medical Countermeasures
RS 25-071: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Continued Management Of Points Of Dispensing And Medical Countermeasures.

[OR 25-093](#) An Ordinance Repealing The Public Purpose Dedication Placed On A Borough-Owned Lot Identified As 49715 South Bendapole Road And Approving The Sale Of The Borough Parcel To The Adjacent Property Owner, Carlos Perez.

[OR 25-095](#) An Ordinance Approving An Appropriation Of \$108,578 From The Areawide Fund Balance For Bridge And Railroad Crossing Major Maintenance And Repair And The Dust Control Program.

- [OR 25-096](#) An Ordinance Approving The Fair Market Value Sale Of Borough-Owned Land To The Alaska State Department Of Transportation And Public Facilities For The Purpose Of Public Right-Of-Way Needed For The Bogard Road At Engstrom Road Improvements.
- [OR 25-097](#) An Ordinance Reappropriating \$300,000 From Solid Waste Project Fund 25048-2400-2428 To Solid Waste Project Fund 25020-2400-2413 For The Enlargement Of Municipal Solid Waste Cell 4.
RS 25-084: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Enlargement Of Municipal Solid Waste Cell 4.
- [OR 25-098](#) An Ordinance Extending Northeast Tehneta Communications Tower Funding.
- [OR 25-099](#) An Ordinance Appropriating \$16,271 From Willow-Caswell Fire Service Area Fund Balance To Willow-Caswell Fire Service Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget.
- [OR 25-100](#) An Ordinance Appropriating \$4,092,915 From School Debt Service Fund Balance And Reappropriating \$521,681.23 In Remaining Insurance Proceeds From The Mat-Su Central School Construction Project To Fund The Shortfall In State School Construction Bond Debt Service Reimbursement.
- [OR 25-101](#) An Ordinance Reappropriating \$229,652.85 From Grant Match - Local And Tribal Consistency Funding To Community Transportation Program Match For The Inner/Outer Springer Loop Pathway Project.
RS 25-085: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Inner/Outer Springer Loop Pathway Project.
Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Hale moved to introduce the legislation as read into the record by the Clerk and to set the public hearings for September 16, 2025.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Fonov

B. MAYORAL NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. VACANCY REPORT

[25-130](#)

Mayoral Requests For Confirmation

Local Emergency Planning Committee

Andrew Gorn, resignation

Assemblymember Hale moved to confirm the resignation requested by the Mayor.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Fonov

C. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

There was no other new business.

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

[OR 25-102](#)

An Ordinance Amending MSB 43.20, Subdivision Development Standards To Allow Lots To Be Reduced To 30,000 Square Feet Within Single-Family Residential Land Use Districts.

Sponsors: Sumner

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Sumner moved to refer Ordinance Serial No. 25-102 to the Planning Commission for 90 days.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Fonov

XI. RECONSIDERATION

There were no reconsiderations.

XII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Assemblymember Gamble spoke to the need to ensure that new school sites include traffic studies.

Ms. McKechnie stated that the State is responsible for deciding the locations of voting precincts. Advised that the School District intends to close schools for an in-service day on years that the State's election coincides with the Borough's election.

Mr. Brown noted that the groundbreaking ceremony for American Charter Academy is scheduled for September 4, 2025, at 1 p.m. Stated that the Big Lake Lions Club Recreation Center will have a grand reopening on September 12, 2025, at 3 p.m. Advised that the Palmer Job Corp Center was constructed on land that the Borough owns and that he is monitoring the funding in the event that it is defunded after the current one-year lease expires. Spoke to the coming Williwaw community cleanup that will occur next week. Spoke to the fuel excise tax open houses that have been scheduled at the request of the Assembly.

Assemblymember Nowers thanked Assemblymember Gamble for the history of the Big Lake Lion's Club. Spoke to concerns that there are no incentives for developers to construct sidewalks in conjunction with subdivision development. Noted that sidewalks provide safe walking areas for residents

Assemblymember Hale thanked the Butte Community for sharing space for his father's memorial ceremony. Spoke to the new park that is being constructed in the Butte.

Assemblymember McKee spoke in support of government transparency.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.