

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

Tim Hale, District 1
Stephanie Nowers, District 2
Dee McKee, District 3
Robert Yundt, 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, APRIL 16, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, April 16, 2024, 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 Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Robert Yundt, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier

Telephonic: 1 - Assemblymember Tim Hale

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Rod Christiansen.

V. SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY

A. Proclamation in Recognition of Coach Rod Christiansen

Mayor DeVries read a proclamation honoring Coach Rod Christiansen into the record.

B. Proclamation in Recognition of the National Day of Prayer

Mayor DeVries read a proclamation honoring the National Day of Prayer into the record.

VI. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

[24-064](#)

- A. Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes: 03/19/24
 - B. Joint Assembly/ School Board Meeting Minutes: 03/26/24
 - C. Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes: 04/02/24
- The minutes were approved as presented without objection.

VII. 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

Katie Gardner, Deputy Superintendent of Business and Operations, announced the first annual school safety week, the establishment of a Safe Schools Acts Task Force, and the NC3 Signing Day at Wasilla High.

3. State of Alaska

There were no reports provided.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Joint Assembly/School Board Committee On School Issues

There were no reports provided.

2. Assembly Public Relations

Mayor DeVries reported on attending the Southcentral Mayor's Energy Coalition.

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

[24-063](#)

1. Abbreviated Plat: 03/27/24
2. Enhanced 911 Advisory Board: 02/13/24
3. Local Road Service Area Advisory Board: 10/20/22, 11/17/22, 01/19/23, 02/16/23, 03/01/23, 04/20/23, 05/18/23, 06/15/23, 07/20/23, 08/17/23, 09/21/23, 10/19/23, 11/16/23, 01/18/24, 02/15/24, 03/21/24
4. MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission: 01/11/24, 01/30/24, 02/05/24
5. North Lake Community Council: 02/17/24, 02/29/24, 03/18/24
6. South Knik River Community Council: 02/15/24

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

G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS

[IM 24-090](#)

Reporting The Conclusion Of Contract For Bid 22-077B With Pinnacle Construction, Inc., For A Final Contract Amount Of \$493,620 For The Station 12-5 Water Storage Design Build.

The informational memorandum was presented, and no comments were noted.

VIII. SPECIAL ORDERS

A. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (MSB 2.12.081; Three Minutes Per Person.)

(Requires 11 Days Advance Notice And Must Otherwise Be In Compliance With The Necessary Code Requirements. If No Advance Notice Is Given, Persons Wishing To Speak May Do So Under The Audience Participation Section Of The Agenda.)

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Three Minutes Per Person.)

[OR 24-037](#)

An Ordinance Approving The Sale Of Certain Borough-Owned Real Property Acquired Through Tax Foreclosure For Delinquent Real Property Tax Years 2017, 2016, And Prior; And Not Needed For Public Purpose.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Jill Irsik, Land Disposal & Foreclosure Specialist, provided a staff report.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following persons requested to have their properties removed from the Tax Sale List: Tracy Branstetter and Crystal Lockok.

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

Assemblymember Bernier moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 24-037.

Assemblymember Yundt moved a primary amendment to Ordinance Serial No. 24-037, by striking TS45-33 and TS45-32 properties from the Tax Sale List for one year.

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

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

Assemblymember Bernier moved a primary amendment to Ordinance Serial No. 24-037, by striking TS45-01, TS45-02, TS45-28, TS45-29, TS45-30, and TS45-31 properties from the Tax Sale List.

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

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

Assemblymember Bernier moved a primary amendment to Information Memorandum No. 24-066, second page, 4th paragraph, by striking the last sentence in the paragraph and replacing it with the following: "The cost for the online auction services will be via flat rate that is divided amongst the sale properties and added to the minimum bid amount."

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

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

The main motion passed as amended by the following vote:

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

[OR 24-041](#) An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating A Grant In The Amount Of \$97,000 From The Alaska State Department Of Military And Veteran's Affairs, 2022 State And Local Cyber Security Grant Program For Reducing Cyber Risk at the Borough.

RS 24-037: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For A Grant In The Amount Of \$97,000 From The Alaska State Department Of Military And Veteran's Affairs, 2022 State And Local Cybersecurity Grant 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 Bernier moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 24-041.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

[OR 24-043](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating January 2022 Mat-Su Windstorms Disaster Relief Funds In The Amount Of \$30,625.66 From The Federal Emergency Management Agency And \$10,208.55 From The Alaska State Division Of Homeland Security And Emergency Management.

RS 24-040: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For Emergency Protective Measures As A Result Of The January 2022 Mat-Su Windstorms Disaster.

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 Bernier moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 24-043.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

[OR 24-044](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating Additional National Opioid Settlement Funding Totaling \$147,203.08 From The Manufacturers And Traders Trust Company For Opioid Settlement Relief.

RS 24-041: A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work And Budget For Opioid Settlement Relief.

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 Bernier moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 24-044.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

[OR 24-046](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$273,039 From The School District For The Mat-Su Central School Construction.

RS 24-043: A Resolution Amending The Scopes Of Work And Budgets For The Houston Middle School Rebuild Project And The Mat-Su Central School Construction.

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 Bernier moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 24-046.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Three Minutes Per Person.)

The following person spoke to the importance of stewardship. Addressed litter and dog droppings at the Butte and the health issues that can be caused by them: Nicholas McGuillin.

The following person spoke to the importance of recycling glass and food security: Travis Friesen.

The following person spoke to the concerns about non governmental organizations acting as if they are the government: Jackie Goforth.

The following person spoke to the graphic adaptation of Anne Frank's Diary: Mary Robinson.

The following person spoke to concerns about the Library Citizens' Advisory Committee: Jeanne Troshynski.

The following person spoke to the current road service area costs and the option to rebid contracts: Pat Daniels, Big Lake RSA Board of Supervisors member.

The following person requested the Assembly review road service area board minutes. Spoke to road service area budget requests and working together for mill rates and contracts: Stephen Edwards, Meadow Lakes RSA Board of Supervisor member.

The meeting recessed at 7:15 p.m. and reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. RESOLUTIONS

[RS 24-044](#) A Resolution Approving The Scopes Of Work And Budgets For Shirley Towne Bridge At Willow Creek Creekbank Hardening And Sushana Drive At Little Susitna River Flooding Mitigation.

[RS 24-049](#) A Resolution Approving Unincorporated Communities For Participation In The Fiscal Year 2025 Community Assistance Program.

[RS 24-050](#) A Resolution Establishing The Minimum Level Of Funding For The School District From Local Sources For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025.

2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

[AM 24-039](#) Approval Of Change Order No. 2 For Contract No. 24-031B With Scarsella Bros, Inc. For The Central Landfill Grading Project To Add \$94,338 For Grading Of The Compost And Tire Recycling Area.

[AM 24-040](#) Award Of Bid No. 24-100B To Alaska Resource Group, Doing Business As D&S Road Service, In The Contract Amount Of \$732,967.70 For Greater Willow Road Service Area No. 20 Annual Road Maintenance.

[AM 24-043](#) Award Of Bid No. 24-104B To Alaska Resource Group, Doing Business As D&S Road Service, In The Contract Amount Of \$737,583.40 For Greater Talkeetna Road Service Area No. 29 Annual Road Maintenance.

[AM 24-044](#) Approval Of Contract Amendment No. 2 To Contract No. 24-071P With Wolf Architecture, Inc. To Extend Contract Completion Date For The Gateway Visitor Center Redesign Project To October 15, 2024.

[AM 24-045](#) Award Of Bid No. 24-110B To Meier Excavation LLC. In The Contract Amount Of \$488,470 To Construct Settlers Bay Drive At Crocker Creek Fish Passage Improvements.

[AM 24-046](#) Award Of Bid No. 24-112B To Northern Asphalt Construction Inc. In The Contract Amount Of \$873,356 To Construct North Erica Drive Road Improvements.

[AM 24-047](#) Award Of Bid No. 24-114B To Ahtna Construction & Primary Products Company, LLC. In The Contract Amount Of \$2,733,125.65 To Reconstruct West Lakes Boulevard.
Ms. McKechnie read the consent agenda 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 Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

[AM 24-041](#) Award Of Bid No. 24-102B To Northern Asphalt Construction Inc. In The Contract Amount Of \$1,771,885 For Meadow Lakes Road Service Area No. 27 Annual Road Maintenance.
Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.
Assemblymember McKee moved to adopt AM No. 24-041.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

[AM 24-042](#) Award Of Bid No. 24-103B To Northern Asphalt Construction Inc In The Contract Amount Of \$2,259,377 For Gold Trail Road Service Area No. 28 Annual Road Maintenance.
Assemblymember McKee moved to adopt AM 24-042.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

X. VETO

XI. NEW BUSINESS

A. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 05/07/24 Assembly Chambers)

- [OR 24-020](#) An Ordinance Confirming The Assessment Roll For The Moose Park Subdivision Road Paving Local Improvement District No. 645 And Establishing The Method Of Terminating Assessments And Making Refunds To Property Owners.
OR 24-021: An Ordinance Providing For The Financing Not To Exceed \$411,000 Principal Amount Of Special Assessment Internal Service Funds For The Moose Park Subdivision Road Paving Local Improvement District No. 645, And Fixing Details Of Said Financing.
- [OR 24-022](#) An Ordinance Confirming The Assessment Roll For South Francine Street Natural Gas Local Improvement District No. 651 And Establishing The Method Of Terminating Assessments And Making Refunds To Property Owners.
Or 24-023: An Ordinance Providing For The Financing Not To Exceed \$35,000 Principal Amount Of Special Assessment Internal Service Funds For South Francine Street Natural Gas Local Improvement District No. 653, And Fixing Details Of Said Financing.
- [OR 24-025](#) An Ordinance Confirming The Assessment Roll For South Marina Circle Road Paving Local Improvement District No. 653 And Establishing The Method Of Terminating Assessments And Making Refunds To Property Owners.
OR 24-026: An Ordinance Providing For The Financing Not To Exceed \$58,800 Principal Amount Of Special Assessment Internal Service Funds For South Marina Circle Road Paving Local Improvement District No. 653, And Fixing Details Of Said Financing.
- [OR 24-030](#) An Ordinance Adopting MSB 2.55, Labor Relations Board Duties And Hearing Procedures; Amending MSB 4.36.010, Labor Relations Board, To Reference The Newly Adopted Portion Of Code; And Repealing MSB 2.54.040, Labor Relations Board, In Its Entirety In Order To Eliminate Duplicate Information In Code Chapters And Create More Consistent Code For The Labor Relations Board And Its Procedures.

[OR 24-047](#) An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$828,750 From The Alaska State Department Of Fish And Game Sustainable Salmon Fund, For Coal Creek And Cottonwood Creek Fish Passage Improvements; And Accepting And Appropriating \$210,000 In Match Funding From The City Of Wasilla For Cottonwood Creek Fish Passage Improvements.
RS 24-045: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For Coal Creek And Cottonwood Creek Fish Passage Improvements; And Authorizing The Manager To Enter Into Funding And Maintenance Agreements With The State Of Alaska And The City Of Wasilla.

[OR 24-048](#) An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$20,174.18 From The Alaska State Division Of Forestry Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program; And Appropriating \$2,017.46 In Matching Funds For Firefighter And Firefighting Equipment And Supplies.
RS 24-046: A Resolution Approving The Scopes Of Work And Budgets For The Alaska State Division Of Forestry Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants And Matching Funds For The Fire Service Areas Of Caswell, Willow, And Talkeetna.

[OR 24-049](#) An Ordinance Adopting MSB 3.15.035 Optional Exemptions, To Provide A Tax Exemption For Property That Creates Economic Development Within The Borough; And Repealing Title 26, Economic Development, In Its Entirety.

[OR 24-050](#) An Ordinance Approving A Reappropriation Of \$85,000 From The Fiscal Year 2024 Areawide Rescue Operating Budget To Purchase A Hazardous Materials Response/Tow Vehicle.
RS 24-048: A Resolution Approving The Amended Budget For The Hazardous Materials Response/Tow Vehicle Project.
Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

B. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 04/23/24, at the Willow Community Center; 04/25/24, at the Menard Sports Complex; and 04/30/24, in Assembly Chambers)

[OR 24-024](#)

An Ordinance Appropriating Monies From The Central Treasury For The Borough Operating Funds, Enterprise Funds, Education Operating Fund And Capital Funds, Establishing The Rate Of Levy For All Borough Functions For The Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2024, And Ending June 30, 2025; And Setting The Surcharge Rate For The Wireline And Wireless Enhanced 911 Systems For The Period Of July 1, 2024, Through June 30, 2025.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Bernier moved to introduce the legislation as read into the record by the Clerk and to set the public hearing for April 23, 2024; April 25, 2024; April 30, 2024, and the May 7, 2024, respectively.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

C. MAYORAL NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. VACANCY REPORT

[24-065](#)

Mayoral Requests For Confirmation
Board of Equalization
James Bradley Young, resignation
Port Commission
Robert Brown, resignation
Transportation Advisory Board
Jillian Morrissey, resignation

Assemblymember Bernier moved to confirm the appointments and resignations requested by the Mayor.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

D. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

There was no other new business.

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

There were no referrals presented.

XII. RECONSIDERATION

There were no reconsiderations presented.

XIII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Spiropoulos noted he will be traveling to the National Attorneys' Conference and not attending the first budget public hearing.

Assemblymember McKee thanked staff for the information regarding RSA contracts and gave a thank you to Big Dipper Construction who maintains snow removal in her RSA.

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

Assemblymember Nowers noted she was happy to see Rod Christiansen receive a proclamation. Spoke to the Palmer Museum and its importance and encourages people to volunteer. Spoke to energy and private power producers.

Mr. Brown noted that budget books are available and budget public hearings begin next week.

Assemblymember Yundt spoke to public outreach from the Sutton/Chickaloon area regarding a potential agreement between the department of public safety and Chickaloon Tribal Police Department.

Assemblymember Fonov noted he stands by Ordinance Serial No. 24-039, establishing the Library Citizens' Advisory Committee.

Assemblymember Hale addressed Assemblymember Yundt's comment and noted he plans to bring forward a Resolution regarding the matter to request the state Department of Public Safety hold additional public meetings.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session conducted.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.