

**SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY REMOVING ALL BOARD MEMBERS FROM THE BIG LAKE ROAD SERVICE AREA 21 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.**

**AGENDA OF: February 18, 2025**

**Assembly Action:**

**AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED:** Introduce and set for public hearing in 90 days.

Route To	Signatures
Originator	<div>2 / 1 0 / 2 0 2 5</div> <div>X N S f o r M a y o r</div> <div>S i g n e d b y : N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s</div>
Borough Attorney	<div>2 / 1 0 / 2 0 2 5</div> <div>X N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s</div> <div>S i g n e d b y : N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s</div>
Borough Manager	<div>2 / 1 0 / 2 0 2 5</div> <div>X M i c h a e l B r o w n</div> <div>S i g n e d b y : M i k e B r o w n</div>
Borough Clerk	<div>2 / 1 0 / 2 0 2 5</div> <div>X E s t e l l e W i e s e f o r</div> <div>S i g n e d b y : E s t e l l e W i e s e</div>

**ATTACHMENT (S):** Resolution Serial No. 25-020 (4 pp)  
Big Lake RSA 21 Membership List (1 pp)

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:** This resolution is sponsored by the Borough Mayor, with the support and concurrence of Assemblymember Gamble and the Borough Manager, to remove the entire Big Lake Road Service Area 21 Board of Supervisors ("RSA 21").

This resolution will be introduced and set for public hearing in 90 days to give the board time to fix the issues identified herein. It is the Mayor's intent that if the board is able to remedy their issues, that the resolution here be withdrawn.

Under MSB 5.25.032, RSA 21 is a service area to provide construction, reconstruction and maintenance of roads, streets, sidewalks and related drainage facilities. Since 2022, RSA 21 board of supervisors has consisted of five members. The current membership of RSA 21 is comprised of Pat Daniels, Terry Gorlick, Andrew Traxler, Garland Morrison, and Nate Suing.

As with all other road service area boards, the ONLY duties of RSA 21 board of supervisors are:

- (1) After public hearing, recommend an annual budget to the manager; and
- (2) Make recommendations to the manager and the assembly on building programs, equipment acquisition and disposal, administrative policies and procedures, contracts, maintenance needs, and other matters as the manager or the assembly may request.

See MSB 5.15.015.

MSB 4.05.030 governs appointment, removal, and vacancy for members of all boards and commissions. Under MSB 4.05.030(B)(1):

- (B) a vacancy occurs on the board when:
  - (1) a member is removed for good cause by the mayor with the approval of the assembly or by a two-thirds majority of the assembly. Good cause shall be as determined solely by the assembly and shall be stated with each removal action.

Resolution 25-051 here removes the entire board of supervisors for the reasons stated in the Resolution and this IM.

## **Discussion**

The RSA 21 board is dysfunctional, frequently at odds with each other, internally combative, and provides average to poor service to the Assembly, Mayor, and Manager while simultaneously consuming a hugely disproportionate amount of time of the Borough Manager, Public Works Department, and Borough staff in general when compared to other RSA boards. No other RSA advisory board has so much infighting, complaining, and dysfunction. No other RSA advisory board takes up so much staff time. For an advisory board which takes up so much staff time, it might be justified if the Assembly and Manager were receiving advice which was of a better quality when compared to other RSA boards, but that is not the case.

For example, at the January 21, 2025 regular Assembly meeting, a board member came and complained to the Assembly about another board member. The complaints centered around assertions that the other board member was soliciting yet other board member(s) to potentially travel to Washington DC to lobby for funds for the RSA. The complaints also centered around a potential Open Meetings Act violation and a public disclosure by the other board member of the prior discussions. The Manager was directed to, and did in fact, use staff time and resources looking into the matter and ascertaining whether there was an impropriety in the activities of

either member.

Prior to that January 21, 2025 meeting, the Borough Clerk had a discussion with a member of the RSA board about the same issue during which she gave advice on how to cure a potential Open Meetings Act violation. After that January 21, 2025 meeting, a Board member posted something on Facebook pertaining to the RSA. This prompted another member to first call the Borough Manager and then email and ask for guidance on new requirements. The Facebook posting also resulted in a phone calls to the Borough from a non-board members with questions over the same issue.

The various borough staff time associated time with the simple above narrative was several hours. This is several hours of time and expertise spent on issues related only to the conduct and allegations of the RSA 21 board members and *in no way* related to advice to the Manager or Assembly about the budget, road maintenance, or any other advice about the operation of RSA 21. RSA boards are in place to assist the Borough by giving advice, not be a drain on Borough staff time because of disagreements and infighting.

Another reason for removal of the entire board is that RSA 21 Board members routinely call the Borough Manager, Public Works Director, and other Borough staff both in Public Works and other departments to directly to talk about issues. These discussions are not limited to RSA advisory functions. Members frequently complain about other board members, other borough staff, and other members of the public. The Borough Manger and other borough staff spend hours *every month* speaking with people about the issues of dysfunction in RSA 21. No other RSA board has members calling the Borough offices with the frequency and discussions with the duration such as that of RSA 21. This has resulted is a highly inordinate amount of staff time to be spending on one of the Borough's 16 advisory road boards. It is especially inordinance because, as noted above, the recommendations and advice of the RSA 21 board are not any different and not any better than those of other RSA boards.

All of the RSA 21 board members talk to one other member frequently and board members know the discussions others are having with the Borough staff. There is no problem in one member sharing information with one other member because with a 5 member board, any 2 can talk about board business outside of a public meeting and not be in violation of the Open Meetings Act. However, there is a problem in that the entire board is aware of the dysfunction, bickering, and the extent of Borough staff involvement being needed almost weekly (and sometimes multiple times per week), but board members will not act to stop the bickering, infighting, and complaints to the Borough about other board members. Even members who may not be engaging in the actions consuming Borough time are

not reining in fellow members through votes on leadership, agendas, and motions. Even worse, if any board members claim to not know of the dysfunction, this means that member is not engaged and aware of the board member's activities.

In addition to these issues, board members have used their title as board member and advocated directly to Borough staff for items, issues, changes, etc. Nowhere in Borough code does it say that board members are entitled to act on their own with their status as a board member. Rather, MSB 5.15.015 indicates that the Board gives advice. This requires discussion and adoption of a position on an issue by the entire board, not individual members advocating on their own. Again, almost no other RSA has members engaging in this type of activity and if other RSA members do reach out directly with their own ideas for their RSAs, it is the rarest of occasions. Not so with this RSA 21 board. Members who are not actively engaging in this behavior likewise are standing idly by.

Members of the public have also contacted the Borough expressing their displeasure and concerns over the functioning of the RSA 21 board. The drama, infighting, jockeying, and general dysfunction of the board are apparent at meetings, and is spilling over to social media. At a recent meeting of the RSA 21 board at the end of January, 2025, members of the public voiced their concerns directly to the board. Some of the concerns from the public centered on the decisions the board was making. Those concerns are not a basis for removal of a board member because reasonable people can always disagree on the best recommendations to give to the Borough. However, there was also concern voiced about the conduct of meetings and the conduct of board members. It is that dysfunction which is part of the basis for removal.

Moreover, it has been reported that in the past, more members of the public attended and participated at meetings. Lately, the meetings have been attended by fewer and fewer members of the public and in the Assembly's estimation, one of the reasons is the dysfunction of the board.

Removal here is not an issue of who is right and who is wrong, or whose ideas are better and whose ideas are worse, or who is acting properly or who is acting improperly. The issue for removal of the board is that the RSA 21 board is dysfunctional for all the reasons discussed in the above paragraphs. RSA 21 needs a break and Borough staff need to be able to staff all boards and commissions.

The resolution here provides that all of the issues outlined above when taken as a whole constitutes good cause to remove the entire Big Lake Road Service Area 21 Board of Supervisors. Upon passage, Pat Daniels, Terry Gorlick, Andrew Traxler, Garland Morrison, and Nate Suing will be removed from the board.

However, before proceeding to bring the issue before the Assembly for consideration, the Mayor is introducing this resolution to be set for public hearing in 90 days. It is the Mayor's intent that if the board is able to remedy their issues, that the resolution here be withdrawn.

**RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:** Introduce and set for public hearing in 90 days.

# MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH DIRECTORY OF ORGANIZATIONS

## RSA - Big Lake RSA No. 21

## Board Exp

Daniels	Pat		Board Position	RSA 21 Member 1		
<b>Company Representing</b>				<b>Term</b>	2/1/2022	to 12/31/2025
PO Box 521655				<b>Type of Term</b>	1	Full & Partial
Big Lake	AK	99652	<b>Member</b>	Primary/LRSAAB		
Home		Work		Cell	(907) 315-3301	E-mail patdinalaska@yahoo.com

Gorlick	Terry		Board Position	RSA 21 Member 2		
<b>Company Representing</b>				<b>Term</b>	5/7/2024	to 12/31/2026
PO Box 521818				<b>Type of Term</b>	1	Full
Big Lake	AK	99652	<b>Member</b>	Member 2/LRSAAB		
Home		Work		Cell	(907) 244-4304	E-mail terry.gorlick@gmail.com

Traxler	Andrew		Board Position	RSA 21 Member 4		
<b>Company Representing</b>				<b>Term</b>	4/19/2022	to 12/31/2027
PO Box 520907				<b>Type of Term</b>	2	Full
Big Lake	AK	99652	<b>Member</b>			
Home		Work		Cell	(907) 315-5138	E-mail ibmillinginalaska@gmail.com

Morrison	Garland		Board Position	RSA 21 Member 5		
<b>Company Representing</b>				<b>Term</b>	4/19/2022	to 12/31/2026
PO Box 520629				<b>Type of Term</b>	2	Full
Big Lake	AK	99652	<b>Member</b>	Member 5/LRSAAB		
Home		Work (717) 348-5515		Cell	(907) 903-6934	E-mail akntaz@aol.com

Suing	Nate		Board Position	RSA 31 Member 3		
<b>Company Representing</b>				<b>Term</b>	1/1/2025	to 12/31/2027
PO Box 520318				<b>Type of Term</b>	1	Full
Big Lake	AK	99652	<b>Member</b>	Alt 1/LRSAAB		
Home	(907) 203-0829	Work		Cell		E-mail nate81hunter@gmail.com

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
DIRECTORY OF ORGANIZATIONS

RSA - Big Lake RSA No. 21

Board Exp

Information Contact	Public Works - O&M Division
Total Board Members	5 Members
Meeting Schedule	Quarterly Meetings (Please check the Notice of Public Meetings schedule at: <a href="http://www.matsugov.us/publicmeetings">www.matsugov.us/publicmeetings</a> for meeting information.)
Meeting Location	Big Lake Lions Club
Board Notes:	