

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, FEBRUARY 3, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, February 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: 7 - Assemblymember Michael Bowles, Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Maxwell Sumner, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier (entered at 6:02 p.m.)

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Assemblymember Bowles moved to remove Ordinance Serial No. 26-017 from introduction and off the agenda.

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 Sumner moved to take up Ordinance Serial No. 25-128 immediately following Ordinance Serial No. 25-123.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, 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.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Assemblymember Fonov.

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

There was no report provided.

3. State of Alaska

There was no report provided.

4. Mat-Su Valley Planning for Transportation Presentation

26-025

MVPT Presentation

Kim Sollien, Executive Director of Mat-Su Valley MVP for Transportation, reported on how the MVP project nomination process works.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Joint Assembly/School Board Committees

There were no reports provided.

2. Assembly Public Relations

There were no reports provided.

C. MANAGER COMMENTS

1. State/Federal Legislation

2. Strategic Planning Issues

26-038 YMCA Land Sale Report

Mike Brown, Borough Manager, reported on the YMCA land sale research and recommendation.

3. AK LNG Tax Framework

26-035 AKLNG Handouts

Mike Brown, Borough Manager, reported on possible tax frameworks for a future Alaska liquid natural gas line that crosses the Borough and invited Frank Richards of the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation to the podium to answer Assembly questions.

D. ATTORNEY COMMENTS

There was no report provided.

E. CLERK COMMENTS

Ms. McKechnie reported on the upcoming meeting schedule. Noted that it is time to schedule the annual evaluation of the Manager, the Attorney, and the Clerk. Suggested dates as follows:

- * Manager's evaluation - May 5, at 4 p.m.;
- * Attorney's evaluation - June 2, at 4 p.m.; and
- * Clerk's evaluation - June 16, at 4 p.m.

Mayor DeVries queried if there was any objection to scheduling those meetings.

There was no objection noted.

F. CITIZEN AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

26-031

1. Agriculture Advisory Board: 12/17/25
2. Big Lake Community Council: 11/11/2025
3. Butte Community Council: 10/08/25
4. Chickaloon Community Council: 08/13/25, 09/10/25, 09/18/25
5. Knik RSA Board of Supervisors: 01/06/26
6. Local RSA Advisory Board: 11/20/25
7. Planning Commission: 01/05/26, Resolution No. 25-28
8. Platting Board: 12/18/25
9. South Colony RSA Board of Supervisors: 07/09/25, 10/08/25, Resolution 26-001
10. Susitna Community Council: 11/06/25
11. Talkeetna Sewer & Water Board: 12/03/25
12. West Lakes FSA Board of Supervisors: 12/08/25

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

G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS

There were no informational memorandums.

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 regarding the lack of ADA-accessible transportation in the Borough and to concerns with not being appointed to a Borough board: Scott Lindbloom.

The following person spoke to concerns regarding the proposed location of the shooting range at Jonesville, the lack of public notice, and the potential impact on property values: Carl Wambach.

The following persons spoke in opposition to Ordinance Serial No. 26-017 and in support of libraries: Angie Fraker, Martha Grover, Irene Waggoner, Ralph Baldwin, Nancy Bertels, Brite Niezek, Sebastian White, Frank Buzby, Mardene Collins, Ron Clark, Bonnie Cavanaugh, Cassandra Kay, Jeannie Troyshinski, Calista Watkins, Kathy Kysar, Jennifer Peronis, Brittany Frost, and Patty Fisher.

The following person spoke to concerns regarding claims of intentional sexualization of children and stated that she will continue to challenge materials she believes are inappropriate for children: Jackie Goforth.

The following person spoke in support of intellectual freedom, in opposition to viewpoint censorship, and opined that allegations of pornographic materials in Borough libraries represent a manufactured crisis for religious and political purposes: Mary Robinson.

The following person spoke in support of Ordinance Serial No. 26-009: John Miller, Executive Director of Camp Maranatha.

The following person spoke in support of development of a liquefied natural gas line: Tom Roberson.

The following persons spoke to the need to protect children from pornographic materials and opined that it is a function of government to protect residents: Dave Maxwell and Ellory Gibbs.

The following person spoke to concerns regarding religious and political appointments to the Library Board, expressed support for libraries, and noted that recent confirmations have been ineffective due to lack of participation: Greg Sumstad.

The following person spoke in support of the Jonesville shooting range, emphasized firearm safety and responsible use, and opined that residents should be responsibly armed: Erica Stolls.

(The meeting recessed at 8:44 p.m. and reconvened at 9:00 p.m.)

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Three Minutes Per Person.)

OR 25-123 An Ordinance Amending MSB 17.59, Lake Management Plan Implementation, To Update Definitions Related To Motorized And Personal Watercraft.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following person opined that lake management plans should go before the voters and spoke in opposition of restricting additional lakes in the Borough: Esther Huddleston.

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. 25-123.

Assemblymember Bernier 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 Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 2 - Assemblymember Sumner and Assemblymember Fonov

OR 25-128 An Ordinance Amending MSB 15.24 Assembly; Zoning Functions To Update The Process Of Initiating And Amending Lake Management Plans.
RS 25-113: A Resolution Establishing A Fee For Processing Requests For Lake Management Plans Under MSB 15.24 Assembly; Zoning Functions.

Sponsors: Sumner

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following person spoke in opposition of the 51 percent threshold and in favor of putting lake management plans before the voters: Esther Huddleston.

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

Assemblymember Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 25-128 and Resolution Serial No. 25-113.

Assemblymember Bowles moved a primary amendment by striking "51" and inserting "75" in its place throughout the legislation.

Assemblymember Fonov moved a secondary amendment by striking "51" and inserting "67" in its place.

The secondary amendment passed by the following vote:

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

No: 1 - Assemblymember Bowles

Assemblymember Bowles moved a secondary amendment by striking percentages and inserting in its place "two-thirds vote of all residents to initiate a lake management plan and three-fourths vote of all residents to finalize a lake management plan."

The secondary amendment failed by the following vote:

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

No: 2 - Assemblymember Bowles and Assemblymember Bernier
Assemblymember Bernier called for the question (to stop debate).

The motion failed (required five votes) by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 3 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Gamble

Assemblymember Bernier moved to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 11 p.m.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

No: 1 - Assemblymember McKee

Assemblymember Nowers moved a primary amendment to MSB 15.24.031(C)(1), that reads "Prior to the date of the public hearing held by the Assembly, the petitioner shall pay the cost of all mailings and advertisements associated with the development of the plan" by striking it in its entirety.

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, and Assemblymember Gamble

No: 3 - Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

Assemblymember Fonov moved a primary amendment to MSB 15.24.031(C), by inserting a new paragraph as follows: "(1) Prior to the date of the public hearing held by the Assembly, the petitioner shall pay 50 percent of the cost of all mailings and advertisements associated with the development of the plan."

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

The 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

The primary amendment failed by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Fonov

No: 4 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, 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 main motion passed as amended by the following vote:

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

OR 25-126 An Ordinance Amending MSB 8.55, Special Events, To Repeal The Surety Bond Requirement Standards.

Sponsors: Fonov

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 Fonov moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 25-126.

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 26-001 An Ordinance Adopting MSB 15.24.030(H) The Matanuska-Susitna Borough 2026 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update.

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. 26-001.

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 26-006 An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$23,804 In Insurance Proceeds Related To A Non-Fault Motor Vehicle Accident Involving Municipal Property.

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. 26-006.

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 26-008 An Ordinance Discontinuing The Library Citizens' Advisory Committee Prior To The Sunset Date Of June 30, 2027.

Sponsors: Bowles

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following person spoke in support of Ordinance Serial No. 26-008: Jackie Goforth.

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

Assemblymember Bowles moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 26-008.

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

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

No: 1 - Assemblymember Nowers

The main motion passed by the following vote:

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

OR 26-009 An Ordinance Approving The Sale Of Borough-Owned Land Located In The Big Lake Area To The Adjacent Property Owner, Alaska District Church Of The Nazarene, In The Amount Of \$35,000.

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. 26-009.

Assemblymember Fonov moved a primary amendment by striking the sales price of "\$35,000" and inserting "\$40,300" in its place.

The primary amendment failed by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Fonov

No: 4 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

Assemblymember Bernier moved to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to midnight.

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

OR 26-010 An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating January 2022 Mat-Su Windstorms Disaster Relief Funds In The Amount Of \$227,355.69 From The Federal Emergency Management Agency; And \$75,785.23 From The Alaska State Division Of Homeland Security And Emergency Management.

RS 26-005: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For MSB School District Facilities As A Result Of The January 2022 Mat-Su Windstorms Disaster, Project No. 55030.

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. 26-010 and Resolution Serial No. 26-005.

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 26-011 An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating A Grant In The Amount Of \$1,462,926 From The Federal Transit Administration For The Transit Operations In The Borough.

RS 26-006: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For Transit Operations In The Borough.

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. 26-011 and Resolution Serial No. 26-006.

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 26-012 An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating A Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant In The Amount Of \$22,935.48 For Fire Extinguisher Training Systems Purchase.
RS 26-007: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For Fire Extinguisher Training Systems Purchase.
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. 26-012 and Resolution Serial No. 26-007.

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. 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 pornographic books in libraries: Linda Spohn.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. RESOLUTIONS

2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

AM 26-007 Approval Of Utility Relocation Costs Of \$132,065 To Enstar Natural Gas For The Herkimer Drive And Spring Drive Road Improvement Project In Road Service Area No. 27; And Set The Completion Date To December 15, 2026.

AM 26-008 Approval Of Change Order No. 6 For Contract No. 23-002P(C) With DOWL, LLC. For The Edgerton Parks Road And North Mountain Trails Drive Upgrade And Pathway Project To Retroactively Extend The Completion Date To July 31, 2026.

AM 26-009 Award Of Proposal No. 26-090P To AMC Engineers In The Contract Amount Of \$103,800 For Stations 7-1 And 8-1 Apparatus Fill Tank Design.

AM 26-010 Award Of Proposal No. 25-150P To HDL Engineering Consultants, LLC. In The Contract Amount Of \$1,050,160 To Provide Professional Land Acquisition Services For The Tex-Al Road Construction Project.

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 26-008 A Resolution Supporting A Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Application For The Burma Road Corridor Project And Requesting Its Nomination For The Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

Assemblymember McKee moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 26-008.

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 26-011 A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Butte Elementary School Septic Replacement Project.
Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.
CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Assemblymember Sumner declared a conflict of interest as he may request a waiver to bid on the project.

RULING: Mayor DeVries ruled that Assemblymember Sumner had a conflict of interest and would be recused from voting.

(Assemblymember Sumner exited the meeting.)

Assemblymember Bernier moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 26-011.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

**Recused: 1 - Assemblymember Sumner
(Assemblymember Sumner re-entered the meeting)**

RS 26-012 A Resolution Amending The Borough's 2026 State Legislative Priorities.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Bernier moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 26-012.

Assemblymember Bernier moved a primary amendment as follows:

*** by inserting a whereas clause to read: " WHEREAS, Meadow Lakes Loop Road has approximately 1,500 vehicles daily and the project costs for road improvements exceeds the road service areas capacity to fund; and**

*** by inserting a now therefore, be it resolved clause to read: "NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough supports submitting for \$5,450,000 in State funding for Meadow Lakes Loop Road improvements."**

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Bowles, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 3 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, and Assemblymember Gamble

The main motion passed as amended by the following vote:

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

No: 1 - Assemblymember Nowers

AM 26-006 Award Of Bid No. 26-110C To General Fire Apparatus In The Contract Amount Of \$556,607 For The Purchase Of A Rosenbauer Rescue Apparatus For The Central Mat-Su Fire Department.
Assemblymember Sumner moved to adopt AM 26-006.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

IX. VETO

There were no vetoes.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 02/17/26, Assembly Chambers)

OR 25-127 An Ordinance Amending MSB 17.67, Tall Structures Including Telecommunication Facilities, Wind Energy Conversion Systems, And Other Tall Structures; To Reduce The Minimum Setback Requirements For New Telecommunications Towers.

Sponsors: Fonov

OR 26-013 An Ordinance Extending The Time Of Completion Of The Expiring Beetle Kill Fire Reduction Initiative Grant Match Funds Through September 30, 2027.

OR 26-015 An Ordinance To Purchase The Adjacent Lot Next To The Big Lake Lions Recreation Center In The Amount Of \$110,000; And To Classify The Land As Reserved Use Lands For The Purpose Of A Sewer System Lot.

OR 26-016 An Ordinance Approving The Land Classification Of A Borough-Owned Property As Reserved Use Land For The Purpose Of A Shooting Range.

OR 26-017 An Ordinance Adopting MSB 2.80.020, Library Materials.

Sponsors: Bowles

[Clerk's Note: Ordinance Serial No. 26-017 was removed from introduction at approval of the agenda.]

OR 26-018 An Ordinance To Issue Areawide General Obligation Bonds In An Amount Not To Exceed \$80,013,700, In One Or More Series To Finance The (A) The Acquisition, Design, Construction, Major Renovation And Renewal Of Educational And Related Capital Improvement Projects In The Matanuska-Susitna Borough, (B) The Construction, Additions, Improvements, Betterments, Repair, Reconstruction, Or Acquisition Of Public Roads And Pathways And Facilities Related Thereto In The Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Together With All Necessary Equipment And Transportation Facilities Including Improving School Access, And The Acquisition Of Lands Or Rights In Lands In Connection Therewith, And (C) The Refunding Of Certain Outstanding General Obligation Bonds Of The Matanuska-Susitna Borough; Fixing Certain Details Of Such Bonds; And Authorizing Their Sale.

OR 26-019 An Ordinance Repealing MSB 1.10.265, Animal Control In Its Entirety; And Adopting MSB 1.10.141, Animal Control, To Establish Areawide Authority For Animal Control Services Within The Borough, To Include The Cities Of Palmer, Wasilla, And Houston.

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

RS 26-009 A Resolution Supporting A Payment In Lieu Of Taxes For The Pipeline Infrastructure Of The Alaska Natural Gas (AKLNG) Project.
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 hearings for February 17, 2026.

The motion passed 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

26-032 Mayoral Requests for Confirmation

Board of Adjustment and Appeals
Sam Laffey
Commission on Salaries and Emoluments
Jeff Nelles
Labor Relations Board
Michael Patterson
Platting Board
Igor Galloway
Sidney Bertz, resignation
Greater Consolidated FSA No. 132
Jeffrey Vincent

[Clerk's Note: Michael Hunter Leach was moved to be confirmed in the motion to approve the vacancy report, however, Mr. Leach was not moved to the confirmation column by the Mayor. Mr. Leach was not confirmed, as the Assembly does not have the power to move someone the Mayor has not moved.]

Assemblymember Bernier moved to confirm the appointments and resignation 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

There was no other new business.

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

There were no referrals.

XI. RECONSIDERATION

There were no reconsiderations.

XII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Spiropoulos advised that state law does not prescribe how lake management plans are adopted and that the determination rests with the Assembly.

Assembly Bernier said a prayer.

Assemblymember Nowers noted that there was significant testimony regarding the library. Noted that the book distributed during audience testimony is not on the shelves in Borough libraries. Stated that she does not doubt the sincerity of those who challenge books. Opined that the current process appears to be spinning out of control. Noted that the Borough has expended substantial staff time attempting to address the concerns of those challenging books. Also noted that many community members who were previously satisfied are becoming unhappy due to increased scrutiny of libraries. Spoke in opposition to the disparaging remarks being made about staff. Stated that the aspersions being cast are unfair, as staff are unable to publicly defend themselves. Related that even Friends of the Library groups are experiencing harassment. Spoke to the need for all parties to remain respectful and civil. Spoke to the flooding occurring from Wasilla Creek. Noted that the affected subdivision is not old, having been constructed within the past 15 years. Spoke to concerns that the Borough allowed that construction. Stated that she would like additional data regarding current natural gas usage in relation to the AKLNG project and information on potential impacts to state funding for schools.

Mr. Brown advised that the estimated cost would be approximately \$8 million and added that the bill currently being drafted at the legislative level reportedly does not include that amount.

Assemblymember Sumner noted that the Borough does require a flood plain development permit.

Mr. Brown advised that he has received Governor Dunleavy's state fiscal plan. Noted that if the Assembly wishes to take a position on the plan, he will need their assistance. Stated that dates have been tentatively scheduled for travel to Juneau to meet with the State Delegation and that he needs to know which members are interested in attending. Advised that if more than three Assemblymembers wish to participate, two separate trips could be scheduled, and suggested February 24 through the 26, or March 3 through the 4.

Assemblymember Bowles stated that he appreciated the public testimony provided. Opined that a lot of what he heard tonight of those opposed to

Ordinance Serial No. 26-017 were negative towards Christianity. Noted that the book provided by Jackie Goforth was one she had contested and that it was subsequently removed from Borough libraries. Spoke in support of increasing education and awareness regarding how parents can monitor the materials their children check out from Borough libraries.

Assemblymember Gamble noted that his wife is a former librarian. Opined that the mudslinging is occurring on both sides of the library issue and expressed hope that all parties would conduct themselves in a mature and respectful manner. Stated that he is supportive of and enthusiastic about the AKLNG project. Spoke to planned construction at the NANA plant in Big Lake in support of the project. Noted that the project has the potential to bring significant revenue into the local economy.

Assemblymember Fonov noted that residents tend to organize effectively when issues of concern arise. Opined that the Assembly strives to serve the best interests of all residents. Stated that the body cannot always anticipate the level or nature of audience participation and that it is sometimes unexpected. Opined that lakefront properties require more thorough review and assessment. Spoke to his appreciation of the AKLNG project presentation. Advised that the book provided by Jackie Goforth was located in the Talkeetna Library. Stated that he would like to attend one of the Juneau trips scheduled for February.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 p.m.



Mayoral Signature and Clerk Attestment

For

February 3, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes

(22 pages)


EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 02/17/26