

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

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

BOROUGH MAYOR
Edna DeVries

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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

WILLOW COMMUNITY CENTER
MILE 69 PARKS HIGHWAY, WILLOW

ASSEMBLY SPECIAL MEETING

6:00 PM

TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2024

Budget Public Hearing

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, April 23, 2024, at the Willow Community Center, Mile 69, Willow, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Edna DeVries.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier

Excused: 2 - Assemblymember Tim Hale and Assemblymember Robert Yundt

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jim Huston, a member of the audience.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The following person thanked the Assembly for funding the Willow Library and Community Center renovations and spoke to the many events that the building is able to support: Patty Villas.

The following person spoke to the accomplishments and history of the Willow Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and in support of wage increases for first responders: Brenda McCain, Willow CERT Program Manager.

The following person noted that in 1988, there was an Assembly resolution that authorized naming the Willow Community Center as the Rosalie White Community Center and spoke in support of the Assembly funding the signage: Jim Huston.

The following person spoke in support of Borough libraries and to the importance of libraries to smaller communities: Susan Whiton.

The following persons thanked the Assembly for postponing the Long Lake Road parcel sale legislation to June 18, 2024: Greg Jones and Steve Charles.

The following person spoke in support of increasing the number of superintendents for Caswell Lakes Road Service Area Board of Supervisors: D.J. McBride, Caswell Lakes Road Service Area Board of Supervisors Chairperson.

The following spoke to the history and work of the Willow Historical and Wildlife Foundation and presented Mayor DeVries with a plaque received for the 2023 Historic Preservation Award for the Old Willow Community Hall for adaptive use of the building: Ida Mae Goeth.

VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC HEARING

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.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following persons spoke to the history of financial challenges for the Willow Community Center and requested that the Assembly consider providing funding for operations: Sydney Burst and Mora Shea.

The following person spoke to the need for funding a crosswalk at the Talkeetna Library: John Cort.

Assemblymember Bernier moved to continue the public hearing for Ordinance Serial No. 24-024 to April 25, 2024, at 6 p.m. at the Menard Sports Complex.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENT

Assemblymember Bernier spoke to different fundraising ideas and encouraged the Willow Community Center to seek funding through the fundraising mechanism. Said a prayer.

Assemblymember Nowers stated that she is pleased to see the effort that Willow residents have been put in regarding turning the Long Lake parcel into a community park. Suggested that the Willow Community Center apply for funding through the Rasmuson Foundation, as they are a great resource for this type of thing.

Assemblymember Gamble stated that it is interesting to go through the budget process as a member of the Assembly instead of either a constituent or employee. Thanked the public for providing testimony.

Mayor DeVries thanked everyone that attended the meeting. Spoke to her appreciation of the Museum tour.

Ms. McKechnie noted that finding election workers for the Willow area can be challenging. Stated that if anyone is interested in applying, to please contact her office.

Ms. Brown spoke to his admiration of the volunteerism in northern communities. Stated that active communities assist in their own governance and contribute to making the Borough a better place to live

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.



Mayoral Signature and Clerk Attestment

For

April 23, 2024, Assembly Budget Public Hearing Minutes

(4 pages)

EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 05/07/24