

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



Tim Hale, District 1
Stephanie Nowers, District 2
Dee McKee, District 3
Robert Yundt, District 4
Mokie Tew, District 5
Jesse Sumner, District 6
Ron Bernier, District 7

MEETING MINUTES

ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS

350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

ASSEMBLY SPECIAL MEETING

6:00 PM

TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2022

Budget Deliberations and Possible Adoption

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, May 10, 2022, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Mayor Edna DeVries.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Assemblymember Tim Hale, Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Robert Yundt, Assemblymember Mokie Tew, Assemblymember Jesse Sumner, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Dr. Randy Trani, School District Superintendent.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The following person invited the Assembly to attend high school graduations and spoke to concerns with amendments to School District budget: Dr. Randy Trani, School District Superintendent.

VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. DELIBERATIONS AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET

[OR 22-022](#) 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, 2022, And Ending June 30, 2023; And Setting The Surcharge Rate For The Wireline And Wireless Enhanced 911 Systems For The Period Of July 1, 2022, Through June 30, 2023.

Lonnie McKechnie, Borough Clerk, read the legislation into the record.

MOTION PENDING: Assemblymember Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-022.

Amendment No. 4

Areawide Fund – Non- Departmental (Tab B, pages 53, 58, and 62)

Assemblymember Nowers moved a primary amendment to the budget as follows and any conforming changes to the budget, the areawide fund mill rate by reducing it by .083 mills, resulting in a \$1,000,000 reduction to areawide unassigned fund balance, leaving a balance of \$1,100,000.

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

[Clerk's Note: the Assembly recessed at 6:21 p.m. and reconvened at 6:30 p.m., prior to the vote being taken for Amendment No. 5.]

Amendment No. 5

Areawide Fund – Non-Departmental (Tab B, pages 53 and 65) and Education Fund (Tab I pages 424 and 423)

Assemblymember Sumner moved a primary amendment to the budget as follows and any conforming changes to the budget:

- **the areawide fund, non-departmental, transfer to education operating (445.220) by decreasing the appropriation by \$1,500,000;**
- **the areawide fund to establish a reserve for supplemental appropriation for home school reimbursement allocation of \$1,500,000;**
- **the education operating fund by striking transfer from areawide (204.000.000.367.110) by decreasing the appropriation by the amount of \$1,500,000; and**
- **the education operating fund by striking from education operating (204.000.000.406.100) by decreasing the appropriation by the amount of \$1,500,000.**

Assemblymember Sumner called for the question (to stop debate). The motion failed (requires five votes) by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 3 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, and Assemblymember Yundt

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 3 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, and Assemblymember Yundt

Amendment No. 6

Land Management Fund – Non-Departmental (Tab E, pages 227 and 228) and Capital Projects (Tab M, page 528)

Assemblymember Sumner moved a primary amendment to the budget as follows and any conforming changes to the budget:

- **by reappropriating \$350,000 from project no. 47031, Jonesville Public Use Area project, to 203.000.000.367.400, Capital Projects;**
- **the Land Management Fund, non-departmental, transferring to 415/425/430/435/440/470 (446.70) by striking \$185,000 and inserting \$535,000 in its place for an increase of \$350,000; and**
- **Capital Projects – Skeetawk Ski Area Development – Grant, by inserting \$350,000 into the budget, to provide a total grant of \$600,000.**

Assemblymember Yundt moved a secondary amendment by striking \$350,000 and inserting \$300,000 in its place and put \$50,000 in the areawide fund balance for a total of \$350,000 to the Skeetawk project.

The secondary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

The primary amendment passed as amended by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 1 - Assemblymember McKee

Amendment No. 7
All Budget Appropriations

Assemblymember Bernier moved a primary amendment to the budget by reducing all appropriations in the budget by five percent and to reduce the mill rates accordingly, excepting debt service, reserves, or non-Borough contributions to the School District.

Assemblymember Bernier moved a secondary amendment by striking five percent and inserting two percent in its place.

The secondary vote failed by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, and Assemblymember Yundt

The primary amendment failed by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Assemblymember Tew, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 5 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, and Assemblymember Sumner

Assemblymember Sumner moved a technical amendment to the budget as follows:

- **Page 9, Caswell Lakes RSA Capital Projects, proposed budget as presented is \$44,410, amendment is \$138,540 for an adjusted amount of \$182,950; and**
- **page 9, Trapper Creek RSA Capital Projects, proposed budget as presented is \$76,850, amendment is (\$50,000) for an adjusted amount of \$26,850;**
- **For a net increase in Capital Projects \$138,540.**

The technical amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

The meeting recessed at 7:40 p.m. and reconvened at 7:55 p.m.

Amendment No. 8

**Areawide Fund – Non-Departmental (Tab B, page 65),
Education Fund (Tab I, pages 424 and 423), and Capital
Projects (Tab M, page 511)**

Assemblymember Yundt moved primary amendment to the budget as follows and any other conforming changes to the budget:

- **the areawide fund, non-departmental, transfer to education operating (445.220) by decreasing the appropriation by the amount of \$11,330,000;**
- **the education operating fund transfer from areawide (204.000.000.367.110) by decreasing the appropriation of \$11,330,000;**
- **the education operating fund (204.000.000.406.100) by decreasing the appropriation by the amount of \$11,330,000;**
- **the Capital Project 2021 Transportation Bond Package by increasing the appropriation by the amount of \$11,330,000, for the projects below to improve safe routes to schools:**
 - o **Trunk Road connector/Katherine Drive - \$2,530,000 (to complete design and construct a collector road from Stringfield Road to Trunk Road and Trunk Road to Manhattan Way, providing access to a new school site and the large Midtown Estates Subdivision;**
 - o **Hemmer Road Extension South - \$4,500,000 (to improve safety and traffic signal access to the Valley Pathways School and a large residential subdivision by extending Hemmer Road south of the Palmer/Wasilla Highway;**
 - o **MSB School District, Shaw Elementary Turn Lane - \$500,000 (add left turn lane on the southbound lane of Wasilla Fishhook for safer access to Shaw Elementary;**
 - o **Seward-Meridian Parkway – Tambert traffic signal - \$1,500,000 (to provide safe crossing of Seward Meridian Parkway for students attending three schools as well as for pedestrians living to the east;**
 - o **MSB School District 2018 Pedestrian Projects - \$2,300,000 (safe routes to schools implementation for Big Lake Elementary, Machetanz Elementary, Larson Elementary Dena'ina Elementary, Redington High, Colony Middle, and Talkeenta Elementary Schools; and**
- **any other conforming changes to the budget.**

Assemblymember Hale moved to postpone Amendment No. 8

and Ordinance Serial No. 22-022 to May 12, 2022.

Assemblymember Bernier called for the question (to stop debate). The motion failed (requires five votes) by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, and Assemblymember Sumner

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

The motion to postpone failed by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, and Assemblymember Yundt

No: 4 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

Assemblymember Sumner called for the question (to stop debate). The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

The primary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 3 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, and Assemblymember Yundt

Amendment No. 9

Areawide Fund – Non- Departmental (Tab B, pages 53, 58, and 62)

Assemblymember Nowers moved a primary amendment to the budget and any conforming changes to the budget as follows: the areawide fund mill rate by reducing it by .048 mills, resulting in a \$579,929 reduction to areawide unassigned fund balance, leaving a balance of \$500,000.

Assemblymember Sumner moved a secondary amendment by striking the mill rate and inserting the \$579,929 to the transportation system bonds in the capital budget.

The secondary amendment passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew,
Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

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

**The primary amendment passed as amended by the following
vote:**

Yes: 5 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Yundt,
Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and
Assemblymember Bernier

No: 2 - Assemblymember Hale, and Assemblymember McKee
**Assemblymember Sumner moved to set the mill rates at 8.901
areawide and .392 non-areawide. The motion passed by the
following vote:**

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers,
Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt,
Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and
Assemblymember Bernier

**Assemblymember Sumner called for the question (to stop
debate). The motion passed by the following vote:**

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers,
Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt,
Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and
Assemblymember Bernier

**The main motion to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-022, as
amended passed by the following vote:**

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers,
Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt,
Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and
Assemblymember Bernier

VII. VETO

A. Motion to Override Any Possible Mayoral Veto on Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Items (Ordinance Serial No. 22-022)

There were no vetoes presented.

VIII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENT

Assemblymember Hale opined that the body did a good job on the budget. Spoke in support of funds for road bond projects. Stated that he is glad that they body reduced the mill rate by 10.74 percent. Noted that he is glad the budget was adopted before his birthday.

Assemblymember Bernier thanked the body for the meeting.

Lonnie McKechnie, Borough Clerk, handed out election brochure to the Assembly. Requested that if they have any changes to please let her know by May 17. Requested to keep the May 12, budget deliberation meeting as scheduled even though the budget is adopted. Advised that if there are no reconsiderations by 5 p.m. on May 11, that she would cancel the meeting.

Mayor DeVries queried if there was any objection.

There was no objection noted.

Assemblymember Yundt stated that he was happy to see Dr. Trani in attendance this evening. Stated that he was not trying to surprise anyone with amendment no. 8 and noted that he voted against his own amendment because he wanted to show that he is not trying to hide anything. Opined that the budget process is a great one and that members have brought thoughtful amendments forward. Spoke to how amendment no. 8 moved funds around in the budget, the result, and the reserve that remains for the School District. Noted that the funds from amendment no. 8 would only be targeted at projects that would benefit the School District. Related that he spoke with two School Board Members and advised them of his proposed amendment. Stated that he intended to meet with Dr. Trani on Thursday to discuss it further.

Assemblymember Nowers thanked the body for their hard work on the budget. Thanked the Manager and the Finance Director for putting together a budget that would have been acceptable without any amendments. Spoke to her appreciation that the amendments were mostly aligned with the Assembly priorities. Opined that the Assembly needs to have a healthy reserve in order to cushion quick growth.

Assemblymember Sumner agreed that the budget was great to begin with but that the Assembly made some positive changes. Noted that it has been the smoothest budget cycle he has been involved with since he was elected. Noted that there is always the possibility of reconsideration if a member feels that something needs to be changed. Stated that he is pleased to see some of the road bond projects funded and able to move forward.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.