

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
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, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Mayor Edna DeVries.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: 3 - Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier

Excused: 2 - Assemblymember Dee McKee, and Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov

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 Lonnie R. McKechnie, Borough Clerk.

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. Petersville Community Non-Profit Corporation

Michelle Stevens and Lisa Agnew of the Petersville Community Non-Profit Corporation, provided a brief introduction to a video regarding concerns with the proposed Alaska Long Trail.

(The meeting recessed at 6:14 p.m. and reconvened at 6:25 p.m.)

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Joint Assembly/School Board Committee On School Issues

There was no report provided.

2. Assembly Public Relations

There were no reports provided.

C. MANAGER COMMENTS

1. State/Federal Legislation

2. Strategic Planning Issues

Mr. Brown reported on upcoming Mat-Su Emergency Expo that will be held on September 28, 2024, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Menard Sports Complex.

D. ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Mr. Spiropoulos noted that once the resolution regarding Assemblymember Yundt's resignation is adopted, it starts the 30-day timeframe in which the Assembly has to fill the District 4 vacancy. Advised that the body should discuss how they want to proceed under Assembly comments.

E. CLERK COMMENTS

Ms. McKechnie reported on the upcoming meeting schedule. Noted that the election brochure is attached for approval. Queried if there were any questions or changes that the Assembly may have.

Assemblymember Nowers spoke to concerns with text spacing on page 11 and opined that the text should be larger, as the page appears to have room for larger text.

Ms. McKechnie advised that she would take a look at that. Related that it was Ms. Weise's art work on the cover page and that she and Jamie Jokhy worked together to make the absentee ballot application the centerfold.

Mayor DeVries queried if there was any objection to the election brochure.

There was no objection noted.

F. CITIZEN AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

[24-120](#)

1. Big Lake Community Council: 06/25/24
2. Caswell Lakes RSA Board of Supervisors: 04/08/24, 06/10/24
3. Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Board: 06/24/24
4. Willow Area Community Organization: 06/05/24

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

G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS

[IM 24-167](#)

Notifying The Assembly Of The Certification Of 2024 Regular Real Property, Personal Property, Oil And Gas Properties, Exempted Properties, And Board Of Equalization Actions.

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

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 with complications with candidate filing. Recommended that the current process be reviewed to see if it could be refined so that it would allow candidates the opportunity to make corrections or changes after candidate filing ends: Steve Ault.

The following person stated that she is grateful for the Library Citizen's Advisory Committee. Opined that it should be able to make a decision on what books are allowed in Libraries instead of being an advisory only committee. Spoke to a recent review of a book and how the process played out: Karen Lewis.

The following persons spoke to concerns with possible federal overreach, to concerns with the possible negative impact to Alaska due to federal regulations, and opined that Alaska should have total control of the Alaska Long Trail: Esther Huddleston, Luke Landry, Michelle Stevens, and Lisa Agnew.

The following person spoke to concerns with pornographic books in Borough libraries: Jackie Goforth.

The following persons spoke in support of Ordinance Serial No. 24-096, which would ban mobile home parks in the Borough: Zane Henning and Alex LNU.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Three Minutes Per Person.)

[OR 24-086](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$944,804 From The United States Department Of Transportation Maritime Administration For The Port MacKenzie Rough Terrain Cargo Crane Project.

RS 24-083: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Port MacKenzie Rough Terrain Cargo Crane Project.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

David Griffin, Port 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 Gamble moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 24-086 and Resolution Serial No. 24-083.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

[OR 24-089](#)

An Ordinance Amending MSB 4.50.030(A), Local Emergency Planning Committee Composition.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Ken Barkley, Emergency Services 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. 24-089.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

[OR 24-090](#)

An Ordinance Appropriating \$75,000 Of Road Service Area Fund Balance That Resulted From The Sale Of Surplus Road Service Area Equipment To A Project Account To Purchase An Asphalt Recycler. RS 24-085: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For Purchase Of A Trailer Mounted Asphalt Recycler. Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Cole Braham, Project Management Division Manager, 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. 24-090 and Resolution Serial No. 24-085.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

[OR 24-091](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating Additional January 2022 Mat-Su Windstorms Disaster Relief Funds In The Amount Of \$30,389.73 From The Federal Emergency Management Agency; And \$10,129.90 From The Alaska State Division Of Homeland Security And Emergency Management. RS 24-087: A Resolution Approving The Amended Budget For 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. 24-091 and Resolution Serial No. 24-087.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

[OR 24-092](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating January 2022 Mat-Su Windstorms Disaster Relief Funds In The Amount Of \$207,916.20 From The Federal Emergency Management Agency; And \$69,305.39 From The Alaska State Division Of Homeland Security And Emergency Management.

RS 24-088: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For Borough-Wide Debris Removal 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. 24-092 and Resolution Serial No. 24-088.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, 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 possible federal overreach, to concerns with the possible negative impact to Alaska due to federal regulations, and opined that Alaska should have total control of the Alaska Long Trail: Samuel Schilling, Chugiak Back Country Free Riders President.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. RESOLUTIONS

[RS 24-093](#)

A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work To Purchase A Skid Steer And Related Equipment For Snow Removal For The Brett Ice Arena Snow Mitigation.

[RS 24-096](#) A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work, Budgets, And Titles From Colony Middle School Boiler Pumps And Controls, Susitna Valley Jr/Sr High School Boiler Replacement, And Wasilla High School Boiler Replacement - Fiscal Year 2025; To Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District Boiler Upgrades - Fiscal Year 2025.

[RS 24-101](#) A Resolution Accepting The Resignation Of Assemblymember Yundt And Declaring The District 4 Assembly Seat Vacant As Of September 10, 2024.

2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

[AM 24-104](#) Acceptance Of Late Filed And Retroactive Senior Citizen And Disabled Veteran Exemption Applications.

[AM 24-105](#) Approval Of Change Order No. 1 To Contract No. 24-089C With Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. To Add \$12,006 For The Central Landfill Cell 4 Design Expansion.

[AM 24-106](#) Approval Of Contract Amendment To Contract No. 24-077B With Pro Built, LLC. To Extend The Completion Date To November 30, 2024, For Station 7-9 West Lakes Ambulance Building Remodel Project.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Bernier moved to approve the consent agenda as read into the record by the Clerk.

Assemblymember Gamble moved to divide the question to take up Resolution Serial No. 24-099, separately.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

FIRST SEGMENT: The motion to approve the consent agenda with the exception of Resolution Serial No. 24-099, passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

[RS 24-099](#) A Resolution Opposing The Release Of Land Authority Along The Proposed Alaska Long Trail As It Pertains To The National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study.

Sponsors: Gamble and Yundt

SECOND SEGMENT: Approval of Resolution No. 24-099.

Assemblymember Gamble moved to postpone Resolution Serial No. 24-099 to October 1, 2024.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

IX. VETO

There were no vetoes presented.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 10/01/24, Assembly Chambers)

[OR 24-093](#) An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating Additional January 2022 Mat-Su Windstorms Disaster Relief Funds In The Amount Of \$658.49 From The Federal Emergency Management Agency; And \$219.50 From The Alaska State Division Of Homeland Security And Emergency Management.

RS 24-092: A Resolution Approving The Amended Budget For The January 2022 Mat-Su Windstorms Disaster.

[OR 24-094](#) An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$11,000 From The Mat-Su Trails And Parks Foundation.

RS 24-094: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget And Authorizing The Manager To Enter Into The Grant Agreement Amendment For A Sutter 500 Trail Dozer

[OR 24-095](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$1,440,340 From The Environmental Protection Agency's Solid Waste Infrastructure For Recycling Grants For Communities.

RS 24-095: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Solid Waste Division's Sustainable Organic Materials Compost Program And Infrastructure Development.

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 October 1, 2024.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

B. MAYORAL NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. VACANCY REPORT

[24-122](#)

Mayoral Requests for Confirmation

There were no appointments to confirm on this vacancy report.

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)

[OR 24-096](#)

An Ordinance Amending MSB 17.73 To Clarify That Mobile Home Parks Are Not Permitted In The Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

Sponsors: Nowers

Assemblymember Nowers moved to refer Ordinance Serial No. 24-096 to the Planning Commission for a period of 90 days.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

XI. RECONSIDERATION

There were no reconsiderations presented.

XII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Spiropoulos encouraged the Assembly to move expeditiously to fill the District 4 vacancy within 30 days. Advised that they should follow the same process that was used when former Assemblymember Sumner resigned and summarized that process. Suggested that the time line could be to close the application period on September 23 and then to have a meeting on September 24 to determine which applicants to interview and then have the interviews on September 26.

Assemblymember Nowers thanked body for referring mobile home park ordinance to the Planning Commission.

Assemblymember Bernier spoke to 3D concrete printer that is used for printing houses. Related that there will be one in Nome soon and that he is hopeful it will reduce home building costs in remote areas. Said a prayer.

[Clerk's Note: The Assembly discussed meeting dates to fill the Assembly District 4 vacancy and scheduled them as follows: Assembly Special Meeting Re: Filling the Assembly District 4 Vacancy (October 1, 2024, at 4 p.m.) and Assembly Special Meeting Re: Filling the Assembly District 4 Vacancy - Candidate Interviews (October 3, 2024, at 6 p.m.) The applications are to be submitted by September 27, 2024, by 5 p.m.]

Mr. Spiropoulos noted that if the Assembly has any ideas for questions, please swing by his office.

Mayor DeVries queried if there was any objection to allow Mr. Robertson to testify.

There was no objection noted.

The following person requested a fire truck fill station at Mile 37 of the Glen Highway for emergency fill stations for fire trucks: Tom Robertson.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.