

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, APRIL 15, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 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: 5 - Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Maxwell Sumner, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, and Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov

Telephonic: 2 - Assemblymember Tim Hale and Assemblymember Ron Bernier (entered in-person at 6:10 p.m.)

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Joshua Tudor, City of Palmer Deputy Mayor.

George Hays, Deputy Manager, read a Citizen Lifesaver Certificate of Appreciation recognizing Dean Teeple into the record.

V. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

25-065

- A. Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes: 03/18/25
- B. Joint Assembly/School Board Meeting Minutes: 03/25/25
- C. Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes: 04/01/25

The minutes were approved as presented without objection.

VI. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

A. AGENCY REPORTS (MSB 2.12.082; Seven Minutes Per Person)

1. Reports From Cities

Josh Tudor, Deputy Mayor from City of Palmer, spoke to recent groundbreaking for the new Visitor's Center and presentation done by Casey Cook, Emergency Manager. Spoke to the new City of Palmer Manager hire and upcoming events.

2. Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District

There was no report provided.

3. State of Alaska

Todd Smoldon, Executive Director of Governor Dunleavy's Mat-Su Office, spoke to the Chutes and Ladders event, recent legislation passed regarding education funding, and business travels of Governor Dunleavy.

4. Library Board

25-066

Library Board Report

Georgia Knazovich, Library Board member, provided a presentation regarding the libraries.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Joint Assembly/School Board Committee On School Issues

There was no report provided.

2. Assembly Public Relations

There was no report provided.

C. MANAGER COMMENTS

1. State/Federal Legislation

2. Strategic Planning Issues

There was no comment provided.

D. ATTORNEY COMMENTS

There was no comment provided.

E. CLERK COMMENTS

Ms. Henry spoke to the upcoming meeting schedule.

F. CITIZEN AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

25-063

1. Abbreviated Plat: 03/19/25
2. Animal Care and Regulation Board: AC&R 25-04
3. Local Road Service Area Advisory Board: 02/20/25
4. North Lakes Community Council: 01/30/25
5. Parks, Recreation, And Trails Advisory Board: 02/24/25
6. Platting Board: 03/06/25
7. South Colony RSA Board of Supervisors: 10/09/24, 01/08/25
8. Sutton Community Council: 04/24/24, 10/30/24, 01/29/25
9. Talkeetna Sewer & Water SSA Board of Supervisors: 03/05/25
10. Water & Wastewater Advisory Board: 12/11/24

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

G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS

IM 25-097 Informing The Assembly Of The Dates For The Next Tax Foreclosure Sale.

IM 25-099 Informing The Assembly Of The May 3, 2025, Crevasse Moraine Trail Cleanup.

The informational memorandums were 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 opposed to permitting a gravel pit at Mile 128 on the Parks Highway and the permitting process: Randy Crosby.

The following persons spoke opposed to obscene books in libraries: Jackie Goforth and Karen Lewis.

The following person spoke to concerns with Resolution Serial No. 25-031: Rodney Hoover.

The following persons spoke in support of Resolution Serial No. 25-046: Larisa Fonov, Oleh Teliyatnikov, Thor Melnyk, Illia Hunyn, Mariia Laktionaum, Laura Anderson, Herb Bishoff, (First name was indiscernible) Malek, and Mark (Did not provide last name).

The following person spoke to concerns with Road Service Area contracts and how they are paid: Mokie Tew.

The following person spoke opposed to Resolution Serial No. 25-031: Adam Jensi.

The following person spoke to recycling: Travis Friesen.

The following person spoke to diversifying the tax base: Alexander Harmon.

The following person spoke to the program New Chance and Uniting for Ukraine: Zoria (Last name was indiscernible).

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Three Minutes Per Person.)

OR 25-040 An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$7,500 From The Mat-Su Trails And Parks Foundation To Continue The Segalhorst Trail Improvements.
RS 25-032: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Segalhorst Trail Improvements.
Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Jillian Morrissey, Community Development 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. 25-040 and Resolution Serial No. 25-032.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

OR 25-041 An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$50,000 From The Mat-Su Trails And Parks Foundation To Begin The Design Of The Jonesville Public Use Area.
RS 25-033: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Jonesville Public Use Area.
Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Jillian Morrissey, Community Development 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 Hale moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 25-041 and Resolution Serial No. 25-033.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

OR 25-049 An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$932,200 From The Alaska State Department Of Fish And Game, Sustainable Salmon Fund For Kings Lake And Anderson Lake Fish Passage Improvements.
RS 25-037: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget And Authorizing The Manager To Enter Into An Agreement With The Alaska State Department Of Fish And Game For Kings Lake And Anderson Lake Fish Passage.

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Tom Adams, Public Works 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 Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 25-049 and Resolution Serial No. 25-037.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

OR 25-051 An Ordinance Approving An Appropriation Of \$66,663 From The Talkeetna Flood Service Area Fund Balance To The Talkeetna Flood Service Area Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget.

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Tom Adams, Public Works 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. 25-051.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

OR 25-052 An Ordinance Adopting MSB 15.24.030(B)(47), Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

No staff report was provided.

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. 25-052.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, 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 Library Board appointments: Frank Bell.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. RESOLUTIONS

- RS 25-038** A Resolution Approving Unincorporated Communities For Participation In The Fiscal Year 2026 Community Assistance Program.
- RS 25-042** A Resolution Extending The Timeframe For The Emergency Services Station 12-9 Building Project.
- RS 25-043** A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work For Port MacKenzie Deferred Maintenance Project.

2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

- AM 25-035** Approval Of Utility Relocation Costs Of \$117,550 To ENSTAR Natural Gas, For The Helen Lane Project In Bogard Road Service Area No. 25, And Extending The Completion Date To December 15, 2025.
- AM 25-036** Approval Of Change Order No. 1 For Contract No. 25-032B With Western Construction & Equipment, LLC, To Add \$146,484 For The 2024 Talkeetna Revetment And Dike Repair Project.
- AM 25-038** Award Of Proposal No. 25-139P To JHB Group, Inc. For The Contract Amount Of \$232,991.03 To Supply A Fire Prevention Training Trailer.
- AM 25-039** Award Of Proposal No. 25-095P To Nvision Architecture, Inc. For The Contract Amount Of \$2,453,338 To Design Birchtree Charter School.

Ms. Henry read the consent agenda into the record.

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 Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

RS 25-031 A Resolution Directing The Manager To Subdivide Tracts 10 And 13, Alaska State Land Survey No. 80-111 (Plat No. 82-80, Palmer Recording District), To Separate The Rail Transportation Corridor And Terminal Easements Of The Point MacKenzie Rail Extension Project From The Remaining Agricultural Land, In Preparation For Future Land Disposal.

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember McKee moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 25-031.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

RS 25-040 A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work And Budget And Extending The Timeframe For A Fill Site Project For The Central Mat-Su Fire Service Area.

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Gamble moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 25-040.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Yes: 1 - Assemblymember Fonov

No: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Sumner, Assemblymember Gamble, and Assemblymember Bernier

RS 25-041 A Resolution Establishing The Minimum Level Of Funding For The Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District From Local Sources For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026.

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember McKee moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 25-041.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

RS 25-046 A Resolution In Support Of Ukrainian Refugees And Their Path To Permanent Residency.

Sponsors: Nowers

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Fonov moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 25-046.

Assemblymember Fonov moved a primary amendment as follows:

***In the title insert the words "and Russian" to read "in support of Ukrainian and Russian refugees";**

***in the first and second WHEREAS clause insert the words "and Russians" to read "WHEREAS, the United States has provided humanitarian relief to Ukrainians and Russians" and "thereby creating uncertainty regarding the future legal status of Ukrainians, Russians, and others under the Humanitarian Parole program"; and**

***in the resolution clauses insert the words "and Russians" to read "permanent pathway to residency for Ukrainians and Russians in the humanitarian and protected status programs", "garner support for legislative solutions that will protect Ukrainians and Russians that are part of these programs from displacement", and "emphasize the importance of protecting and securing the futures of Ukrainian and Russians who have become valued members of our community."**

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

AM 25-037 Award Of Bid No. 25-144B To McKinley Fence Company Of Mat-Su Valley, Inc., For The Contract Amount Of \$169,596 To Supply And Install Fencing And Entrance Gate At The Central Landfill.

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember McKee moved to adopt AM No. 25-037.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, 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 presented.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 05/06/25 Assembly Chambers)

OR 25-018 An Ordinance Conveying The Borough's Remaining Interest In The Real Property Estate Identified As Tax Id Nos. 21N05W36A002 And 21N05W36A003 To Mark And Sandra Stahl; And Implement Agricultural Covenants, Conditions, And Restrictions.

OR 25-055 An Ordinance Reappropriating \$150,000 From The Solid Waste Operating Fund To A Solid Waste Project Fund To Purchase And Improve Software With Automated Lane Support For The New Landfill Entrance And Scale House.
RS 25-044: A Resolution Approving The Reappropriation Of \$150,000 From The Solid Waste Operating Fund To A Solid Waste Project Fund To Purchase And Improve Software With Automated Lane Support For The New Landfill Entrance And Scale House.

B. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 04/22/25, At The Menard Sports Complex; 04/24/25, At The Willow Community Center; And 04/29/25, In Assembly Chambers)

OR 25-025 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, 2025, And Ending June 30, 2026; And Setting The Surcharge Rate For The Wireline And Wireless Enhanced 911 Systems For The Period Of July 1, 2025, Through June 30, 2026.

Ms. Henry 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 hearing for April 22, 2025; April 24, 2025; April 29, 2025; and May 6, 2025, respectively.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

C. MAYORAL NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. VACANCY REPORT

25-064

Mayoral Requests For Confirmation

Agriculture Advisory Board

Craig Hanson

Joint Assembly/School Board Committee on School District Funding
Issues

Dee McKee

Dmitri Fonov

Library Board

Sally Pollen

Port Commission

Bill Gamble

Gold Trail RSA No. 28

William Swenson

Lazy Mountain RSA No. 19

Scott Godwin

Meadow Lakes RSA No. 27

Charles Conrad

Sean Bradley

**Assemblymember Bernier moved to confirm the appointments
requested by the Mayor.**

**Assemblymember Nowers moved to divide the question to take
up the confirmation of Sally Pollen separately.**

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

**The first segment of the vacancy report was moved to confirm all
appointments, excluding Sally Pollen.**

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

The second segment of the vacancy report, the appointment of Sally Pollen.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

No: 2 - Assemblymember Hale and Assemblymember Nowers

D. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

1. MOTION TO AMEND SOMETHING PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED (To Amend The Referral Timeframe)

OR 25-047 An Ordinance Amending MSB 2.08.060 And MSB 2.12.060, Compensation For The Mayor And Assembly.

Sponsors: Fonov

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Fonov moved to amend the referral of Ordinance Serial No. 25-047, which was previously adopted, by striking "365 days" and inserting "60 days."

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

No: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

25-067 Proposed Referral Amendment

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

There were no referrals presented.

XI. RECONSIDERATION

There were no reconsiderations.

XII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Spiropoulos spoke to his upcoming time out of the office.

Assemblymember Bernier spoke to the meeting's audience participation and said a prayer.

Assemblymember Nowers spoke the Gateway Visitor's Center groundbreaking event and concerns with the Library Board and Library Citizens' Advisory Committee.

Mr. Brown spoke to meeting with Senator Sullivan.

Assemblymember Hale thanked Administration for their work on the Jonesville Project and the fellow assembly members for their support.

Ms. Henry thanked everyone for having her and Jamie Jokhy, Clerk's Office Department Administrative Specialist, at the dais.

Assemblymember Sumner thanked staff for their work.

Assemblymember Gamble spoke to a Point MacKenzie Community Council meeting and to public outreach regarding Port MacKenzie.

Assemblymember Fonov spoke to his motion to amend something previously adopted and his support for the Library Board and Library Citizens' Advisory Committee.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.



Mayoral Signature and Clerk Attestment

For

April 15, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes

(15 pages)


EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 05/20/25