

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

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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

WILLOW COMMUNITY CENTER
MILE 69 PARKS HIGHWAY, WILLOW

ASSEMBLY SPECIAL MEETING

6:00 PM

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2025

Budget Public Hearing

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at the Willow Community Center, Mile 69 Parks Highway, Willow, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Mayor Edna DeVries.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Maxwell Sumner, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier

Excused: 2 - Assemblymember Tim Hale, and Assemblymember Dee McKee

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Assemblymember Nowers.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The following persons spoke to the need for funding for a community project to connect and improve access from the Senior Center to the Community Center: Jim Huston and Rodney McCambridge.

The following persons spoke to the need for funding for drainage improvements at Jordan Lake Park and Jolly Creek: Jim Faiks, Lary McKinstry, and Kare Crandall.

The following person requested that collection sites that take beetle killed spruce be opened sooner due to the dry fire conditions this year: Larry Noreen.

The following persons spoke in support of the Borough acquiring the Big Lake Lion's Club due to its importance to the Big Lake Community: Bill Haller and Patty Fisher.

The following person spoke to the need for improvements at Lynx Lake as indicated in the Borough's road improvement plan list: Mike Klawitter.

The following person spoke to how important Willow Librarians are to their community: Brenda McCain.

The following person urged the Assembly to abide by President Trump's Executive Order eliminating diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and opined that it should be up to the voters if the Borough acquires the Big Lake Lion's Club: Mark Spohn.

The following person spoke to the need to expand the electrical grid in northern areas to improve the lives of seniors that may rely on oxygen at home and noted that oxygen is not allowed to be used with generators: Elizabeth Villanuevas.

The following persons spoke to concerns with the city of Houston attempting to acquire Willow land for a future airport: Brian (Last name not discernable) and Mark Doty.

VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC HEARING

[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. Strawn read the legislation into the record.

Mayor DeVries reopened the public hearing.

The following person spoke to the need to improve audio quality in the Willow Area Community Center meeting room by installing acoustic panels: Sid Bertz.

The following person opined that road service area budgets should be increased to repair and upgrade substandard roads: Tom Phillips.

Assemblymember Bernier moved to continue the public hearing on Ordinance Serial No. 25-025 to April 29, 2025, at 6 p.m. in Borough Assembly Chambers.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENT

Assemblymember Gamble opined that when the community comes forward with funding requests and demonstrates that a majority of the funds have already been raised, it reflects positively on their requests. Shared the development plans for Jordan Lake Park/Jolly Creek.

Ms. Strawn noted that the Assembly is in receipt of the budget amendment memorandum from Ms. McKechnie. Stated that should they have any questions, Ms. McKechnie will be back in the office on April 28.

Assemblymember Bernier thanked the community for attending the meeting. Said a prayer.

Mr. Brown noted that if the body has questions about the budget or amendments that they would like to see, to be prepared as deliberations will start on May 1.

Mayor DeVries thanked School District staff for supporting the audio needs of the meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.