

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
Robert Yundt, 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, MARCH 19, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 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 Robert Yundt, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, and Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov

Excused: 1 - Assemblymember Tim Hale

Telephonic: 1 - 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 Mike Brown, Borough Manager.

V. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

[24-041](#)

A. Special Assembly Meeting Minutes: 02/17/24

B. Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes: 02/20/24

The minutes were approved as presented.

VI. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

A. AGENCY REPORTS (MSB 2.12.082; Seven minutes per person)

1. Reports From Cities

Crystal Nygard, Deputy Administrator for the City of Wasilla, spoke to the success of the Arctic Winter Games, city of Wasilla business licenses, and the upcoming Mat-Su Economic Summit.

2. Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District

Katie Gardner, Deputy Superintendent of Business and Operations, reported on the activities of the School District, Arctic Winter Games, upcoming School Tours, and March Madness.

3. State of Alaska

Mr. Todd Smoldon, Executive Director of Governor Dunleavy's Mat-Su Office, reported on the status of the legislative session and recent education veto.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Joint Assembly/School Board Committee On School Issues

There were no reports provided.

2. Assembly Public Relations

Mayor DeVries reported on attending the Southcentral Mayor Energy Coalition.

C. MANAGER COMMENTS

1. State/Federal Legislation

2. Strategic Planning Issues

Mr. Brown provided an update on the scrap metal transfer event and the annual coupon for the landfills.

D. ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Mr. Spiropoulos spoke to the US Supreme Court and their recent ruling regarding social media blocking or removal of posts by public officials and how this will affect the Borough.

E. CLERK COMMENTS

Ms. McKechnie spoke to the upcoming meeting schedule.

F. CITIZEN AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

[24-042](#)

1. Abbreviated Plat: 02/07/24, 02/14/24, 02/21/24, 02/28/24, 03/06/24
2. Chickaloon Community Council: 01/10/24
3. North Lakes Community Council: 01/24/24
4. Planning Commission: 01/15/24, 02/12/24
5. Wastewater & Septage Advisory Board: 12/13/23

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

G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS

[IM 24-058](#)

Reporting Conclusion Of Contract No. 22-052B With Northern Asphalt Construction, Inc. For A Total Contract Amount Of \$902,744.05 For The West Cormorant Way Improvements Project.

[IM 24-059](#)

Reporting Conclusion Of Contract No. 22-103B with Western Construction & Equipment, LLC, For a Total Contract Amount Of \$275,100 For The Right-of-Way Surveying and Clearing Services Project.

[IM 24-064](#)

Reporting Conclusion Of Contract No. 23-104B with Northern Asphalt Construction, Inc. For a Total Contract Amount Of \$382,476.36 For The Lucille Street Rehabilitation Project.

[IM 24-065](#)

Informing The Assembly Of The Managers Signature On Five Grant Applications For Submission To The Alaska State Library For The Alaska Public Library Assistance Grants.

[IM 24-068](#)

Informing The Assembly Of The Change In Process For Borough Owned-Land Sales To Include Online Sales.

The informational memorandums were presented and no comments were noted.

VII. SPECIAL ORDERS

A. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (MSB 2.12.081; Three Minutes Per Person.)

(Requires 11 Days Advance Notice And Must Otherwise Be In Compliance With The Necessary Code Requirements. If No Advance Notice Is Given, Persons Wishing To Speak May Do So Under The Audience Participation Section Of The Agenda.)

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Three Minutes Per Person.)

RS 24-023

A Resolution Approving An Application To Relocate A Beverage Dispensary License From An Area Outside City Limits In The Borough To A Location Within The City Of Wasilla.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Rick Benedict, Planner II, 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 Yundt moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 24-023.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

OR 24-033

An Ordinance Extending The Time Limit For Completion Of Expiring Project Funds Through June 30, 2025.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mike Brown, Borough 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 Yundt moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 24-033.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

[OR 24-035](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$50,000 From The Mat-Su Trails And Parks Foundation To Continue Development Of Settlers Bay Coastal Park.

RS 24-029: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For Settlers Bay Coastal Park.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Christian Munar, Land Management Specialist, 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. 24-035 and Resolution Serial No. 24-029. The motion passed without objection by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Three Minutes Per Person.)

The following persons spoke in support of OR 24-039: Jackie Goforth, John Miller, Mike Coons, Mary Revetta, Justin Gobe, Michelle McKenzie, Finn Rye, and Chris Tyree.

The following person spoke to libraries and book challenges: Karen Lewis.

The following persons spoke in opposition of OR 24-039: Kathy Kysar, Mary Robinson, and Jeanne Troshynske.

The following person spoke to MSB code concerning tobacco taxes: David Potter.

The following person spoke in support of libraries and librarians and in opposition of OR 24-039: Marian Charles.

The following person spoke in support of libraries and parenting: Jessica Young.

The following persons spoke to obscene books in libraries: Elizabeth (Last name not given.), Linda Spohm, Mark Spohm, Julie Pauler, and Ron Huxstead.

The following person spoke in support of libraries, the first amendment, and in opposition of OR 24-039: Susan Pougher.

The following person spoke in support of home schooling for concerned parents: Travis Friesen.

The meeting recessed at 7:40 p.m. and reconvened at 7:50 p.m.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. RESOLUTIONS

[RS 24-033](#) A Resolution Approving The Amended Scope Of Work For Project No. 47513, Planning Department On-Call Positions.

[RS 24-035](#) A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work For Station Repairs And Modernization Phase I Project For Greater Palmer Consolidated Fire Service Area, To Include Expanded Areas Of Repair And Upgrades.

[RS 24-036](#) A Resolution Requesting The School Board Review And Comment Directly To The Alaska State Legislature On Senate Bill 173, The Safe Schools Act.

Sponsors: Yundt and Hale

2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

[AM 24-015](#) Award Of Bid No. 24-087B To AHTNA Construction & Primary Products, LLC. In The Contract Amount of \$105,070 To Implement The Next Steps Of The Alsop Interim Materials District Mine And Reclamation Plan.

[AM 24-027](#) Approval Of A Contract Amendment With RESPEC For \$109,749 For Continued Support With The Metropolitan Planning Organization Development.

[AM 24-028](#) Approval Of Change Order No. 4 For Contract No. 23-002P(C) With Dowl, LLC. For The Edgerton Parks Road Mountain Trails Drive Upgrade And Pathway Project To Add \$424,875 For Construction Management Services; And To Extend The Completion Date To December 31, 2025.

[AM 24-029](#) Approval Of Utility Relocation Costs Of \$166,159.70 To GCI For The Smith Road Extension Upgrade And Pathway Project And To Extend The Completion Date To December 15, 2024.

[AM 24-030](#) Acceptance Of Late Filed And Retroactive Senior Citizen And Disabled Veteran Exemption Applications.

[AM 24-031](#) Approval Of Contract Extension For Contract 21-150B With Roger Hickel Contracting, Inc. To Extend The Contract Completion Date To May 30, 2024; And Add \$50,000 For Change Order Authority For The Construction Of Houston Middle School.
Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

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

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, 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 04/02/24 Assembly Chambers)

[OR 24-036](#) An Ordinance Extending The Time Limit For Completion Of The On-Line Web Presence And The GIS On-Line Mapping Projects To June 30, 2025.
RS 24-030: A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work And Budgets For The On-Line Web Presence And GIS Online Mapping Projects.

[OR 24-038](#) An Ordinance Repealing MSB 3.36, Business Licenses.

Sponsors: DeVries, McKee and Yundt

[OR 24-039](#) An Ordinance Establishing A Citizens' Advisory Committee To Review And Make Recommendations To The Administration Regarding Challenged Library Materials.

Sponsors: Fonov, McKee and Bernier

[OR 24-040](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$982,703.26 From Revenue Replacement Funding For 8 Of The 16 Road Service Areas.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Yundt moved to introduce the legislation as read into the record by the Clerk and to set the public hearings for April 2, 2024.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

B. MAYORAL NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. VACANCY REPORT

[24-043](#)

Mayoral Requests For Confirmation

Board of Equalization

Amy Henry, resignation

Local Emergency Planning Committee

Jason Bauer

Knik RSA No. 17

Gary Foster, resignation

Assemblymember Yundt moved to confirm the appointments and resignations requested by the Mayor. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Gamble, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

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)

There were no referrals presented.

XI. RECONSIDERATION

There were no reconsiderations presented.

XII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

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

Assemblymember Nowers expressed excitement about online auctions for land sales. Spoke to OR 24-039 and the Arctic Winter Games.

Assemblymember Gamble provided a brief report on lobbying in Juneau and to the success of the Arctic Winter Games.

Assemblymember Yundt thanked everyone for their hard work on the Arctic Winter Games and spoke to his wrestling clubs tournament.

Mayor DeVries thanked all the volunteers of the Arctic Winter Games and announced they would be receiving a proclamation at the following meeting.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was executive session conducted.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Disabled Persons Needing Reasonable Accommodation In Order To Participate At An Assembly Meeting Should Contact The Borough ADA Coordinator At (907) 861-8432 At Least One Week In Advance Of The Meeting.