

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

350 East Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska 99645 - 907-861-8683

BOROUGH MAYOR

Vern Halter

BOROUGH CLERK

Lonnie R. McKechnie, CMC

BOROUGH MANAGER

John Moosey

BOROUGH ATTORNEY

Nicholas Spiropoulos



BOROUGH ASSEMBLY

Tim Hale, District 1
Stephanie Nowers, District 2
George McKee, District 3
Ted Leonard, District 4
Dan Mayfield, District 5
Jesse Sumner, District 6
Tam Boeve, District 7

MEETING MINUTES

ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS

350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

ASSEMBLY REGULAR MEETING

6:00 PM

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Mayor Vern Halter.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: 3 - Assemblymember George McKee, Assemblymember Dan Mayfield, and Assemblymember Jesse Sumner

Telephonic: 4 - Assemblymember Tim Hale, Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Ted Leonard, and Assemblymember Tam Boeve

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mr. Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney.

V. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

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

There were no reports provided.

2. Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District

There were no reports provided.

3. State of Alaska

Mr. Todd Smolden, Director of Governor Dunleavy's Mat-Su Office, reported on State activities.

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

Mr. Ken Barkley, Department of Emergency Services Director, reported on how first responders are addressing potential issues with COVID-19 and its impact on processes.

Mr. John Harris, State Lobbyist, reported on the activities of the State Legislature.

D. ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Mr. Spiropoulos reported on the impacts to the State Court system due to Covid-19.

The meeting recessed at 6:45 p.m. and reconvened at 6:50 p.m.

E. CLERK COMMENTS

Ms. McKechnie spoke to code requirements regarding budget public hearings and noted the reasons that a third public hearing was added. Advised that the budget public hearings for Willow and Wasilla need to be rescheduled to the Assembly Chambers with telephonic testimony.

Mayor Halter queried if there was any objection to moving both public hearings to Assembly Chambers.

There was no objection noted.

Ms. McKechnie noted that there is a special meeting scheduled for the Manager's annual evaluation on May 5. Queried if the Assembly would like to cancel this meeting, as the Manager may be at the City of Palmer by that time.

Mayor Halter queried if there was any objection to cancelling the Manager's Evaluation.

There was no objection noted.

F. CITIZEN AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

20-046

1. Aviation Advisory Board: 10/09/19, 01/22/20
 2. Library Board: 11/16/19
 3. Local Road Service Area Advisory Board: 01/16/20
 4. MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission: 01/16/20, Resolution No. 20-01
 5. Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Board: 12/09/19
 6. Planning Commission: 02/03/20, Resolution No. 20-10
 7. Platting Board: 01/16/20, Resolution No. 20-004
 8. Transportation Advisory Board: 12/05/19
 9. Wastewater and Septage Advisory Board: 12/12/19
 10. North Lakes Community Council: 01/30/20
 11. Tanaina Community Council: 06/07/19, 06/27/19, 07/23/19, 08/20/19, 09/17/19, 10/15/19, 11/19/19, 01/28/20, 02/21/20
 12. Trapper Creek Community Council: 01/16/20
- The citizen and other correspondence were presented and no comments were noted.

G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS

[IM 20-063](#) Informing The Assembly Of A Grant Agreement Between The Borough And The Mat-Su Trails And Parks Foundation In The Amount Of \$34,847.84 For Improvements At Fish Creek (Jay Nolfi) Park In Big Lake.

[IM 20-069](#) Informing The Assembly Of An Agreement Between The Borough And The Willow Library Association Committing Grant Funds And Local Donations To The Willow Library Project In The Amount Of \$1,838,384.

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.)

There were no persons to be heard.

B. ALL PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY AND AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Three Minutes Per Person.)

The following person stated that the Meadow Lakes Community Council would be holding their next meeting through Zoom: Ms. Patricia Fisher.

The following person spoke to concerns with the attempt at providing the public a way to testify telephonically: Mr. Eugene Carl Haberman.

The following person thanked all essential and health care workers for their response to COVID-19: Mr. Jim Sykes, former Assembly member.

C. LEGISLATION SUBJECT TO TESTIMONY UNDER ITEM B

[OR 20-023](#) An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$1,748,000.00 In Grant Funds From The Mat-Su Health Foundation, Through The Willow Library Association, To Fund 435, Project No. 10186; And Accept And Appropriate \$90,384 Of Community Donations To Fund 435, Project No. 10186, For The New Willow Library And Community Center Upgrades.

RS 20-016: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For The New Willow Library And Community Center Upgrades.

Sponsors: Boeve

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Mayfield moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 20-023 and Resolution Serial No. 20-016. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Leonard, Assemblymember Mayfield, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Boeve

[OR 20-026](#) An Ordinance Amending MSB 5.25.142, Greater Palmer Consolidated Fire Service Area No. 132, And MSB 5.25.022 South Colony Road Service Area No. 16, For The Purpose Of Altering Existing Service Area Boundaries Located In The Hatcher Pass Government Peak Recreation Area Within Sections 22, 23 And 29, Township 19 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian, Alaska.
RS 20-021: A Resolution Finding That The Alteration Of The Service Area Boundaries For The Greater Palmer Consolidated Fire Service Area No. 132 And The South Colony Road Service Area No. 16 For Properties Located Within The Government Peak Recreation Area Serves The Public Interest Without The Placement Of The Question On The Ballot.

Sponsors: Sumner

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Mayfield moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 20-26 and Resolution Serial No. 20-021. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Leonard, Assemblymember Mayfield, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Boeve

[OR 20-027](#) An Ordinance Confirming The Land Classification As Reserved Use For Borough-Owned Land Identified As Tax Parcel 18N02E33A015 Is For Purpose Of Connectivity And Academy Charter School Expansion.
Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Mayfield moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 20-027. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Leonard, Assemblymember Mayfield, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Boeve

[OR 20-028](#) An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$1,354.84 In Fiscal Year 2020 Project Income And \$10,654.16 In Anticipated Fiscal Year 2020 Project Income For The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Project No 20395.

RS 20-022: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget, For The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Project No 20395.

Assemblymember Mayfield moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 20-028 and Resolution Serial No. 20-022. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Leonard, Assemblymember Mayfield, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Boeve

[RS 20-023](#) A Resolution Directing The Manager To Provide A Proposal And Budget To The Assembly To Post The Borough's Checkbook Online.

Sponsors: Hale

Assemblymember Mayfield moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 20-023. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Leonard, Assemblymember Mayfield, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Boeve

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. RESOLUTIONS

[RS 20-024](#) A Resolution Requesting The State Of Alaska Provide Necessary Funding To The Alaska Wing Civil Air Patrol At A Minimum Of \$184,300 To Provide Support For Utility Costs, Insurance Premiums, And Emergency Roof Repair.

Sponsors: Boeve

[RS 20-025](#) A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work And Budget For The Fiscal Years 2009, 2010, And 2011 Community Assistance Program, Project No. 47014, To Provide Funding To Upgrade The Lazy Mountain Fire Station 3-3 Parking Lot.

[RS 20-026](#) A Resolution Approving Certain Unincorporated Communities For Participation In The Fiscal Year 2021 Community Assistance Program.

- [RS 20-027](#) A Resolution Amending The Scope Of Work For Project No. 10178, Fund 435, To Further Support Abatement And Remediation Of The Fireweed Building.
- [RS 20-029](#) A Resolution Extending The Temporary Fee Waiver For Encroachment Permits For Driveways In The Right-Of-Way Prior To September 10, 2012.
- [RS 20-030](#) A Resolution Temporarily Waiving Review Fees For Liquor License Referrals And Marijuana Related Facilities License Referrals.

2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

- [AM 20-015](#) Award Of Bid No. 20-089B To Western Construction & Equipment, LLC. In The Contract Amount Of \$149,264 For Mark Drive Improvements.
- [AM 20-016](#) Award Of Bid No. 20-095B To Tutka, LLC. In The Contract Amount Of \$610,883.49 For Marble Way Fish Passage.
- [AM 20-017](#) Award Of Bid No. 20-090B To Ficklin Construction, LLC. In The Contract Amount Of \$219,961.05 For Ridgecrest Road Improvements.
- [AM 20-018](#) Acceptance Of Late Filed And Retroactive Senior Citizen And Disabled Veteran Tax Exemptions.
- [AM 20-019](#) Award Of Proposal No. 20-077P To CRW Engineering Group, LLC. In The Contract Amount Of \$146,070 For The Design Of Improvements At The Central Mat-Su Emergency Services Training Complex.
- [AM 20-020](#) Authorization For The Manager To Sign The Mat-Su Central Dispatch Data Sharing Agreement By And Between Valley Transit, Sunshine Transit, Chickaloon Transit, Mat-Su Senior Services, The Borough, And The Mat-Su Health Foundation For The Collection And Analysis Of Data From The Mat-Su Central Dispatch Pilot Project For The Mat-Su Public Transit System.
- [AM 20-021](#) Award Of Bid No. 20-098B To Northern Asphalt Construction, Inc. In The Contract Amount Of \$248,802 For Canter Circle Improvements.

Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Mayfield moved to approve the consent agenda as read into the record by the Clerk. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember Leonard, Assemblymember Mayfield, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Boeve

No: 1 - Assemblymember McKee

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

IX. VETO

There were no vetoes presented.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 04/21/20 Assembly Chambers)

[OR 20-029](#) An Ordinance To Retain For Public Purpose A Portion Of The Northeast One-Quarter Of The Southwest One-Quarter In Section 11, Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian, Palmer Recording District, Third Judicial District, State Of Alaska And Lot 3, Block 2 Shadowmere Estates Phase I, Plat No. 84-273, Palmer Recording District, Third Judicial District, State Of Alaska, Identified As Borough Tax Parcels 117N02E11C013 And 52874B02L003, Which Were Acquired Through Tax Foreclosure.

[OR 20-031](#) An Ordinance Appropriating \$22,000 From The Reserve For Assembly Project Fund 100.262.980, To The City Of Wasilla To Complete The Veteran's Wall Of Honor.

Sponsors: Halter and Mayfield

[OR 20-032](#) An Ordinance Approving The Appropriation Of \$68,850 From Project No. 25048-2400-2416, Fund 420; And \$75,000 From Project No. 25048-2400-2417, Fund 420, To Project No. 25048-2400-2414, Fund 420; For An Increased Cost For The Fire Suppression And Ventilation System Repair/Upgrade At The Hazardous Waste Facility/Administrative Office Building At The Central Landfill.
RS 20-028: A Resolution Approving The Amended Scope Of Work To Include All Construction, Equipment , And Required Components To Project No. 25048-2400-2414; And The Amended Budgets For Project Nos. 25048-2400-2414, 25048-2400-2416, And 25048-2400-2417.
Ms. Henry read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Mayfield moved to introduce the legislation as read into the record by the Clerk and to set the public hearings for April 21, 2020. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers,
Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Leonard,
Assemblymember Mayfield, Assemblymember Sumner, and
Assemblymember Boeve

B. MAYORAL NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. VACANCY REPORT

[20-045](#) Mayoral Requests for Confirmation

Sponsors: Halter

Library Board

Nicole Pease

Transportation Advisory Board

Emily Dodge, resignation

LaQuita Chmielowski

Knik RSA No. 17

Kimberly Byrwa, resignation

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

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers,
Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Leonard,
Assemblymember Mayfield, Assemblymember Sumner, and
Assemblymember Boeve

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.

XI. RECONSIDERATION

There were no reconsiderations presented.

XII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Assemblymember Nowers stated that she would be willing to help to trouble shoot any future call in meetings. Stated that she will attend in person for Thursday and the press conference on Wednesday.

Assemblymember Hale noted that it was a rocky start to the beginning of the meeting. Stated that things are working as best as possible for being a new way of doing things. Stated that he will not be able to call into the meeting on Thursday as he will be working.

Assemblymembers Leonard thanked the Clerk's Office for their tremendous effort in trying to make the meeting work with social distancing. Thanked all essential workers who are working during the pandemic. Spoke to his appreciation of the dedication of health care workers.

Assemblymember Boeve thanked Ms. Henry for her extra effort trying to make the meeting work. Noted that it was hard to hear at times, but that she understands this is a brand new process and it will take a few trial runs to cinch down a good process.

Assemblymember McKee opined that it is a waste of time to hear budget presentations as there is no money coming in from the State. Stated that oil prices are at an all-time low. Related that he will oppose any increases in the mill rate. Opined that a budget decrease of 10 percent is ideal. Noted that he only objected to the consent agenda because of AM 20-019. Opined that there are plenty of engineers on staff and that the Borough should not have to contract out for engineering work. Congratulated Mr. Moosey for being hired as City Manager with the city of Palmer. Stated that Mr. Moosey has done a fine job in addressing all of his concerns over the years.

Assemblymember Sumner noted that he wants to reconsider AM 20-019. Stated that he is hopeful that we can get through this crisis soon while there is still an economy. Opined that no matter what, the Borough will be facing steep headwinds and should look for ways to tighten up our spending.

Assemblymember Mayfield noted that humans are social animals and that the COVID-19 is causing hardships due to social distancing. Stated that the Clerk's Office is working to try to ensure the public is able to participate in this time of social distancing. Stated that he is hopeful that the system will be improved by the next time the Assembly is receiving public testimony.

Mayor Halter stated that reconsideration of AM 20-019 would be taken up on April 21, 2020. Advised members that they have many opportunities to

pull things from the consent agenda so that it does not have to be addressed later. Advised that it was not the fault of Ms. Henry that the system was so difficult. Noted that we are all doing the best we can to figure things out quickly. Spoke in appreciation of Dr. Zink and thanked her for her leadership. Opined that actions taken early in the Borough have kept the Borough's COVID-19 counts low. Thanked the public for adhering to social distancing requirements. Stated that he is confident that this will all be over with by summer as long as we keep doing what we are doing now. Stated that he wants Mr. Moosey and Mr. Wyatt to ensure that the public is able to easily testify telephonically for the budget public hearings. Thanked all of the essential workers for being on the front lines. Opined that awarding contracts for firms in the Borough is providing employment for residents.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session held.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.