

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



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 SPECIAL MEETING

6:00 PM

TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020

Budget Public Hearing

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, April 28, 2020, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Vern Halter.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Assemblymember Tim Hale, Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember George McKee, Assemblymember Ted Leonard, Assemblymember Dan Mayfield, Assemblymember Jesse Sumner, and Assemblymember Tam Boeve

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mr. George Hays, Deputy Borough Manager.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY (3 Minutes Per Person)

The following person spoke in support of full funding for the School District and urged the Assembly to consider a tax of some sort to increase revenue: Ms. Jill Showman, Knik Elementary School Teacher.

The following person spoke in support of funding for the Community Enrichment Program: Mr. Elliott Hunker, Talkeetna Community Enrichment Director.

The following persons spoke in support of funding for the Mat-Su Convention and Visitors' Bureau and to concerns with the lack of tourism related to the Corona Virus: Mr. Lars Larson; Ms. Roberta Warner, Alaska Travel Industry Association Vice President; Ms. Suzanne Rust;

The following persons spoke in opposition of the School District absorbing school bond debt reimbursement: Mr. Jamin Burton; Ms. Diane K. Shibe, Mat-Su Education Association President; Ms. Bri Reintsman; Mr. James Seltzer; Ms. Jackie Cunningham, Colony High School Teacher; Ms. Nancy Blake; Mr. Tim Walters; Mr. Mike Evans; Ms. Janelle Gagnon, Colony Middle School Librarian; and Ms. Michelle Carrington, Finger Lake Elementary Teacher.

The meeting recessed at 6:50 p.m. and reconvened at 6:57 p.m.

A. Budget Public Hearing

[OR 20-020](#)

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, 2020 And Ending June 30, 2021; And Setting The Surcharge Rate For The Wireline And Wireless Enhanced 911 Systems For The Period Of July 1, 2020 Through June 30, 2021.

Assemblymember Mayfield moved to continue the public hearing for Ordinance Serial No. 20-020 to April 30, 2020, at 6 p.m. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

AssemblyMember Mayfield moved to reschedule the budget deliberations scheduled for May 7, 12, and 14 to May 26, 28, and June 1. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Assemblymember Hale moved to add Ordinance Serial No. 20-020 to the May 19, 2020, for public hearing. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

VI. RECRUITMENT OF A BOROUGH MANAGER

Assemblymember Sumner noted that he is sponsoring legislation that would change the Borough to a strong mayor form of government. Stated that it would have to go before the voters. Opined that the search for a new manager should be postponed until the voters are able to make a decision. Commented that the legislation could have a substantial impact on the search for a new manager.

Mr. Spiropoulos reported on the status of hiring a professional search firm to hire a new manager. Stated that the question is does the Assembly want to delay the hiring of a search firm until after the ballot question in November.

Ms. McKechnie related that candidates may not want to apply for the manager position if they are aware that a ballot question that would directly impact their position, is on the ballot.

Assemblymember McKee moved to postpone the hiring of a professional search firm until the Assembly has dispensed with the legislation that would change the Borough to a strong mayor form of government. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENT

Ms. McKechnie advised that a meeting occurred between herself, Mr. Hays, and Mr. Wyatt relating to a long-term solution for telephonic participation. Noted that Ms. Henry had been in contact with the State regarding what they use.

Assemblymember Nowers thanked the public that testified on the budget. Opined that an amazing effort was made by teachers to move to online learning. Noted that online learning is a poor second as children miss the social interactions of school. Stated that she is excited to see businesses reopening. Noted that out in public that you sometimes see some people who are wearing masks and some that are not. Stated that she is hopeful that Phase 1 goes well.

Assemblymember Leonard thanked the public for their testimony. Noted that the Assembly supports education, and always has. Noted that there are some businesses that are reopening. Thanked Assemblymember Mayfield for moving to reschedule the budget deliberations to the end of the month.

Assemblymember Mayfield spoke in support of education. Thanked the body for the meeting.

Mayor Halter spoke to his list of priority capital projects. Noted the reality of the Borough absorbing the school bond debt reimbursement is causing the need for something else to be taken out of the budget. Noted this issue is being caused by the State. Advised that Governor Dunleavy indicated that the Borough would receive CARES Act Funds, but that they cannot be used for school bond debt reimbursement. Noted that he is hopeful to see support from the Legislators. Spoke to concerns with changing to a strong mayor form of government

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.