

# 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

Michael Brown

BOROUGH ATTORNEY

Nicholas Spiropoulos



Tim Hale, District 1  
Stephanie Nowers, District 2  
George McKee, District 3  
Robert Yundt, District 4  
Mokie Tew, District 5  
Jesse Sumner, District 6  
Tam Boeve, District 7

## MEETING MINUTES

ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS

350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

ASSEMBLY SPECIAL MEETING

9:00 AM

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Wednesday, October 21, 2020, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 9 a.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 without objection.

### **IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mr. Eugene Carl Haberman, a member of the audience.

## V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The following person spoke to concerns with the public process: Mr. Eugene Carl Haberman.

Mayor Halter queried if there was any objection to taking up the introduction prior to the Manager interviews.

There was no objection noted.

## VIII. INTRODUCTION (For Public Hearing 10/26/20, Assembly Chambers)

[OR 20-098](#) An Ordinance Waiving The Witness Signature Requirement For Absentee By Mail Ballots For The Regular Borough Election To Occur On November 3, 2020.

**Sponsors:** Mayfield

Ms. McKechnie 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 hearing for October 26, 2020. The motion passed by the following vote:**

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

## VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

### A. Candidate Interviews

## Borough Manager Recruitment

Mayor Halter queried if there was any objection to recessing until it was time for the first interview.

There was no objection noted.

The Assembly recessed and reconvened during the interviews at the following times:

- recessed at 9:10 a.m. and reconvened at 9:24 a.m.
- recessed at 12:32 p.m. and reconvened at 12:59 p.m.; and
- recessed at 2 p.m. and reconvened at 2:08 p.m.

Mayor Halter noted that Ms. McKechnie would be reading the interview questions to the candidates and asked if there was any objection.

There was no objection noted.

Candidate List and interview time:

Travis Mortimer - 9:30 a.m.

Michael Brown - 10:30 a.m.

Randy Robertson - 11:30 a.m.

Thomas Hutka - 1 p.m.

Janette Bower - 2 p.m.

Each candidate was asked and answered the following questions:

Describe the most challenging management situation you ever experienced and how did you strive to resolve the challenge? What was the outcome and, if you could revisit the situation, would you do anything differently?

If you have reviewed our budget and CAFR, what is your assessment of our financial condition and what recommendations do you have for us for improvement and to achieve long-term fiscal sustainability without raising taxes? Tell us about your fiscal management experience budgeting, reporting, cutting costs, building and maintaining reserves.

Follow Up: What is your philosophy when faced with a budget shortfall.

Describe your management style and in your daily activities, how do you ensure accountability and avoiding priorities of the Borough Assembly falling through cracks or otherwise being unachieved?

What is your experience with collective bargaining and maintaining productive relationships with organized labor?

Follow Up: Have you ever been before a labor arbitrator or court? What do you consider to be the Borough's top three opportunities and how would you capitalize on them? Conversely, what are the top three challenges and how would you advise the Assembly to approach them?

If the Mayor and Assembly adopted a policy or collectively expressed a stance with which you had significant professional disagreement, how would you express that disagreement and seek resolution? Can you cite an example in your response?

Discuss your approach to and experience with economic development and diversification of the tax base. Can you share both a success story and a project that did not turn out as well as you hoped and what you learned from it?

First, please tell us about your management style with department directors. Then, please describe how you view the interaction of department heads and other staff with the Assembly, versus the Manager's role.

Follow Up: With a highly experienced senior staff, how would you evaluate their abilities and establish your management approach?

Are there any questions that you we did not ask that you think we should have?

**VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (For Subjects That Tend To Prejudice The Reputation Or Character Of Any Person, Provided That Person May Request A Public Discussion; Matters Which By Law Are Required To Be Confidential; And Matters Involving Consideration Of Government Records That By Law Are Not Subject To Public Disclosure.)**

## **A. Filling the Vacancy of the Borough Manager and Discussion of Qualifications**

**Assemblymember Mayfield moved to enter into executive session for subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation or character of any person, provided that person may request a public discussion; matters which by law are required to be confidential; and matters involving consideration of government records that by law are not subject to public disclosure. Those present during the executive session were the Mayor, the Assembly, the Attorney, the Clerk, the Interim Borough Manager, the Human Resources Director, and Baker Tilley.**

**The motion passed without objection and the Assembly entered into executive session at 2:54 p.m.**

**Assemblymember Mayfield moved to exit executive session.**

**The motion passed without objection and the Assembly exited executive session at 3:57 p.m.**

**Assemblymember Mayfield moved to move the following candidates forward in the process:**

- Randy Robertson;**
- Thomas Hutka; and**
- Michael Brown.**

**The motion passed by the following vote:**

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

## **IX. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENT**

Mr. Spiropoulos advised the Assembly that due to new guidance from the U.S. Treasury Department, that the Assembly cannot do the individual CARES Act per capita payment without an assessment of immediate need.

The Assembly discussed possible options on how the funds could be disbursed.

There were no individual comments provided.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.