

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
Mokie Tew, District 5
Jesse Sumner, District 6
Ron Bernier, District 7

MEETING MINUTES

ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS

350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

ASSEMBLY REGULAR MEETING

6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Wednesday, August 17, 2022, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Mayor Edna DeVries.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Assemblymember Tim Hale, Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Robert Yundt, Assemblymember Mokie Tew, and Assemblymember Jesse Sumner

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 Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney.

V. SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY

A. Mayoral Recognition of Palmer Girls Softball Team

Mayor DeVries read the proclamation into the record, introduced team members, and presented the proclamation to the Palmer Girls Softball Team.

VI. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

[22-121](#)

- A. Assembly Special Meeting Minutes: 05/17/22
 - B. Assembly Regular Meeting Minutes: 05/17/22
 - C. Joint Assembly/School Board Meeting Minutes: 05/23/22
 - D. Assembly Special Meeting Minutes: 05/24/22
 - E. Assembly Special Meeting Minutes: 06/07/22
 - F. Assembly Regular Meeting Minutes: 06/07/22
- The minutes were approved as presented without objection.

VII. 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

Katie Gardener, School District Superintendent of Human Resources, reported on the issues encountered on the beginning of the school year.

3. State of Alaska

There was no report provided.

4. Mat-Su Convention and Visitors Bureau

Bonnie Quill, Executive Director of the Mat-Su Convention and Visitor's Bureau, reported on the activities of the Bureau to increase tourism.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Joint Assembly/School Board Committee On School Issues

There was no report provided.

2. Assembly Public Relations

There were no reports provided.

C. MANAGER COMMENTS

1. State/Federal Legislation

2. Strategic Planning Issues

There was no report provided.

D. ATTORNEY COMMENTS

There was no report provided.

E. CLERK COMMENTS

Ms. McKechnie spoke to the upcoming meeting schedule and pertinent election dates.

F. CITIZEN AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

There was no citizen and other correspondence.

G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS

[IM 22-165](#)

Notifying The Assembly Of A Land Acquisition Of MSB Tax Parcel 18N01E03A009 Containing Approximately .99 Acres And Lot 1, JLT Subdivision Containing 1.32 Acres For The Palmer Fishhook Public Safety Building, Station 3-5.

The informational memorandum was presented and no comments were noted.

VIII. SPECIAL ORDERS

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

There were no persons to be heard.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Three Minutes Per Person.)

[OR 22-089](#)

An Ordinance Providing For Real Property Tax Relief In The Amount Of 1 Mill Against The Fiscal Year 2023 Areawide Real Property Tax Levy; And Accepting And Appropriating \$11,948,300 From the Alaska State Debt Reimbursement To Fund The Relief.

Sponsors: Sumner

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney, provided a staff report.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following persons spoke to concerns with taxes: Mike Alexander and Mike Coons.

The following person spoke in support of the ordinance: Brian Endle.

The following person spoke to concerns with governments increasing taxes and then sending rebates to residents: Keith (last name indiscernible)

There being no one else who wished to testify, the public hearing closed and discussion moved to the Assembly.

Assemblymember Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-089. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

OR 22-090

An Ordinance Authorizing The Issuance Of General Obligation Bonds, In One Or More Series, In An Aggregate Principle Amount Not To Exceed \$24,000,000, To Finance The Design And Construction Of Educational Capital Improvement Projects And Related Capital Improvements In The Borough, And To Submit The Question Of The Issuance Of Such Bonds To The Qualified Voters Of The Borough At The November 8, 2022, Borough Regular Election.

Sponsors: Yundt and Sumner

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney and Mike Brown, Borough Manager, provided a staff report.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following persons spoke in support of forward funding for a new school over bond debt: Jolie Martin, Sayen Everett, Nathan Chud, Mike Coons, and Father Randy Hillman.

There being no others present who wished to testify, the public hearing closed and discussion moved to the Assembly.

Assemblymember Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-090. The motion failed by the following vote:

No: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Three Minutes Per Person.)

The following persons spoke in opposition to the use of voting machines: Keith Bolan, John Miller, Kathy (last name not provided), Sally Pollen, Brian Endle, Mike Coons, Robin Bjork, Karen Lewis, Jackie Goforth, Holly Sheldon Lee, Richard Stoffel, Representative David Eastman, Father Randy Hillman, Daniel Sentz, Chris Tyree, Ken Hanson, Lloyd Thurman, Denise Fullman, Renee Morris, Floyd (last name indiscernible), Dustin Renner, Kim Swanson, Steve Renner, Jim Stocker, Linn McCabe, Jim Vernon, Earl Lackey, Ben Stocker, and Julie Endle.

The following person spoke to concerns with the Burma Road Iditarod Under Pass: Donna DeFusco.

The following person spoke in opposition to the Wastewater and Septage Advisory Board being disbanded: Tom Stoelting.

The following person spoke to concerns for how conditional use permits are processed: Bill Brister.

The meeting recessed at 8:45 p.m. and reconvened at 9:01 p.m.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. RESOLUTIONS

[RS 22-070](#) A Resolution Authorizing The Submittal Of A Grant Application To The Alaska State Office Of History And Archeology On Behalf Of The Alaska State Fair In Palmer, To Rehabilitate Two Buildings Listed In The National Register Of Historic Places As Part Of The Rebarchek Historic Farmstead.

2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

[AM 22-103](#) Destruction Of Ballots From The July 12, 2022, Special Borough Election.

[AM 22-106](#) Approval Of Contract Amendment To Contract No. 22-026B With Ficklin Construction, LLC. To Extend The Completion Date For Wasilla Creek Headwaters Trail Improvements.

[AM 22-109](#) Authorizing The Conversion Of One Full-Time Surveyor Position To One Full-Time Civil Engineer Position.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

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

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

[RS 22-069](#) A Resolution Authorizing The Submittal Of A Grant Application To The Alaska State Office Of History And Archeology To Support Phase II Of The Borough's Historic Preservation Plan Update.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Adam Bradway, Planner II, provided a staff report.

Assemblymember Sumner moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 22-069. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, and Assemblymember Yundt

No: 3 - Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

[RS 22-071](#) A Resolution Directing Staff To Discontinue Efforts Toward A Septage Treatment Facility Project And To Disband The Wastewater And Septage Advisory Board.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mike Brown, Borough Manager, provided a staff report.

Assemblymember Hale moved to adopt Resolution Serial No. 22-071. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

No: 1 - Assemblymember Hale

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

X. VETO

There were no vetoes presented.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

A. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 09/06/22, Assembly Chambers)

[OR 22-091](#) An Ordinance Approving A New Right-Of-Way Acquisition Officer Position For The Predesign And Engineering Division Of The Public Works Department.

[OR 22-092](#) An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$11,762,000 To Fund 430, Roads And Bridges Capital Projects For The Acquisition, Construction, And Installation Of Capital Improvements Within The Borough; And \$238,000 To Fund 430 For Related Issuance Costs From The Proceeds Of The 2022 Series A Taxable General Obligation Transportation System Bonds.

[RS 22-072](#) A Resolution Directing The Clerk To Verify Election Results By Performing A Hand Count Of The November 8, 2022, Regular Election.

Sponsors: McKee

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Sumner moved to introduce the legislation as read into the record by the Clerk and to set the public hearings for September 6, 2022. The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

B. MAYORAL NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. VACANCY REPORT

There was no vacancy report.

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.

XII. RECONSIDERATION

There were no reconsiderations.

XIII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Assemblymember Nowers spoke to having enjoyed touring the new Houston High School. Commented that it is a nice facility. Spoke to her appreciation of all of the hard work that went into vetting a wastewater and septage facility. Noted that it was very useful in assisting her in making a decision. Stated that the Alaska State Fair opens this week.

Assemblymember Yundt advised that the School District and the Borough's Department of Emergency Services is partnering to start a two-year program for training teens to become certified fire fighters. Noted that teens are not eligible to join until their junior year in high school. Stated that they are not eligible to take the certification test until they turn 18 and that if they pass, then they will be a certified fire fighter. Stated that he is hopeful that by offering this opportunity to high schoolers, that it will help bridge the gap in hiring fire fighters for the Borough.

Assemblymember Bernier wished everyone a good week.

Ms. McKechnie addressed the public comment that was made about persons in a household that received voter identification cards when they had not registered. Advised that a number of years ago, an initiative came forward and passed that tied voter registration to applying for the permanent fund dividend.

Mr. Brown noted that the Wastewater and Septage Advisory Board has to be dissolved by ordinance. Apologized that it was not caught before the resolution came forward. Stated that there will be legislation to repeal that board on the next agenda. Stated that staff will be working on legislation to appropriate funds for the Mat-Su Central School for consideration by the Assembly. Noted that legislation cannot come forward until the School Board issues a resolution in support.

Assemblymember Hale said he would see everyone at the fair.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.