

# 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  
Dmitri Fonov, District 6  
Ron Bernier, District 7

## MEETING MINUTES

### ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS

350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

ASSEMBLY REGULAR MEETING

6:00 PM

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2022

## I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, October 4, 2022, 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:** 6 - Assemblymember Tim Hale, Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Mokie Tew, Assemblymember Jesse Sumner, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier

**Telephonic:** 1 - Assemblymember Robert Yundt

## III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor DeVries queried if there were any changes to the agenda.

**Assemblymember Hale moved to take up Ordinance Serial No. 22-119, as the first public hearing. The motion passed by the following vote:**

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

Mayor DeVries queried if there were any additional changes to the agenda.

The agenda was approved as amended.

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

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mayor Glenda Ledford, city of Wasilla Mayor.

#### **V. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS**

There were no minutes presented.

#### **VI. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE**

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

###### **1. Reports From Cities**

Mayor Glenda Ledford, city of Wasilla, reported on the activities of the City.

###### **2. Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District**

There was no report provided.

###### **3. State of Alaska**

There was no report provided.

##### **B. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

###### **1. Joint Assembly/School Board Committee On School Issues**

Assemblymember Nowers reported on the most recent meeting of the Joint Assembly/School Board Committee on School Issues.

###### **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. Noted that the December 6, 2022, regular Assembly meeting conflicts with the Alaska Municipal League Conference and queried if the body would like to reschedule that meeting to Thursday, December 8, 2022.

Mayor DeVries queried if there was any objection.

There was no object noted.

## **F. CITIZEN AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no Citizen and Other Correspondence presented.

## **G. INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUMS**

### [IM 22-219](#)

Informing The Assembly Of The Electronic Submittal Of The Fiscal Year 2024 Human Services Community Matching Grant Application Through The Department Of Health And Social Services Grants Electronic Management System.

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. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Three Minutes Per Person.)**

[OR 22-119](#)

An Ordinance Amending Title 25, Elections, To Require Ballots Be Counted By Hand Only, Direct That Counting Happen At Precincts, And Allow For Observation By Poll Watchers And Canvass Board Observers; All To Be Effective Beginning In 2023.

**Sponsors:** Bernier

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Mr. Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney, provided a staff report.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following persons spoke in support of Ordinance Serial No. 22-119: Cheryl Kaidon, Rachel Allen, Brian Endle, Richard Stoffel, Jackie Goforth, Cindy Hudgens, Joel Figman, Michael Garhart, Karen Lewis, John Lettow, Thomas John Elson, Will Barron, Ken Hanson, Dave Maxwell, Daniel Simpson, Tom Braun, Steve Renner, Kim Garr, David Eastman, Loy Thurman, Joe Fuller, Christopher Kirkham, Kathy Harris, and Steven Simmons.

The following persons spoke in opposition to Ordinance Serial No. 22-219 and to concerns with possible cheating during a hand count: Sherry Wilson and Susan Kay.

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

**Assemblymember Bernier moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-119.**

**Assemblymember Nowers moved to continue the public hearing to February 7, 2022.**

**Assemblymember Bernier called for the question (to stop debate). The motion passed by the following vote:**

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

**The motion to postpone failed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 2 - Assemblymember Hale, and Assemblymember Nowers

**No:** 5 - Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, and Assemblymember Bernier

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

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

**No:** 1 - Assemblymember Nowers

**Assemblymember Yundt moved to schedule a special meeting for an elections discussion for January 17, 2023, at 3 p.m. The motion passed by the following vote:**

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

The meeting recessed at 7:40 p.m. and reconvened at 7:53 p.m.

[OR 22-076](#)

An Ordinance Repealing MSB 17.10, Overlay Districts.  
Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Alex Strawn, Planning and Land Use Director, 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 Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-076. 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 22-106](#)

An Ordinance Amending MSB 15.39.070, Compensation And Reimbursement, For The Board Of Adjustment And Appeals To Be Equal With The Increase Adopted With The Fiscal Year 2023 Budget.  
Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record and 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 Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-106. 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 22-107](#) An Ordinance Reappropriating \$50,000 From The Census Project Account To Recreation Services Operating Budget And Authorizing The Conversion Of Four On-Call Water Safety Instructor Positions Into Two Full-Time Water Safety Instructor Positions.

**Sponsors:** Sumner

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Hugh Leslie, Parks, Recreation, and Library Services 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 Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-107. 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 22-108](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating A Grant In The Amount Of \$40,000 From The Alaska State Department Of Health And Social Services, To Allow For The Implementation And Management Of Points Of Dispensing And Medical Countermeasures.

RS 22-088: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For A Grant In The Amount Of \$40,000 From The Alaska State Department Of Health And Social Services For The Implementation And Management Of Points Of Dispensing And Medical Countermeasures.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Cheyenne Heindel, Finance Director, 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 Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-108 and Resolution Serial No. 22-088. 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 22-109](#)

An Ordinance Approving An Appropriation Of \$1,650,000 From The Central Mat-Su Fire Service Area Fund Balance To Purchase Two New Rescue Engines.

RS 22-084: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For A Project To Purchase Two New Rescue Engines For Central Mat-Su Fire Service Area.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Ken Barkley, Emergency Services Director, provided a staff report.

Mayor DeVries opened the public hearing.

The following person opined that the Emergency Services Department did not need any additional equipment: George McKee.

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. 22-109 and Resolution Serial No. 22-084.**

**Assemblymember Sumner moved to postpone Ordinance Serial No. 22-109 and Resolution Serial No. 22-084, to October 18; and to have a full accounting of all Emergency Services provided to the Assembly as soon as possible.**

**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



[OR 22-114](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$1,000,000 From The Alaska State Department Of Commerce, Community, And Economic Development For The 2024 Arctic Winter Games.

RS 22-091: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget, And Authorizing The Borough Manager To Enter Into The Grant Agreement For The 2024 Arctic Winter Games.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Cheyenne Heindel, Finance Director, 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 Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-114 and Resolution Serial No. 22-091. 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 22-115](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$179,794.39 From The Alaska State Department Of Commerce, Community, And Economic Development For The Maintenance Of Seasonally Impassable Roads In The Big Lake Area For Fiscal Year 2023.

RS 22-092: A Resolution Assembly Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget, And Authorizing The Borough Manager To Enter Into The Grant Agreement For The Maintenance Of Seasonally Impassable Roads In The Big Lake Area For Fiscal Year 2023.

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 Tew moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-115 and Resolution Serial No. 22-092. 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 22-116](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$30,000,000 From The Alaska State Department Of Commerce, Community, And Economic Development; And Appropriating \$13,239,792 From Areawide Fund Balance, For The 2021 Transportation Infrastructure Package.

RS 22-093: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget, And Authorizing The Borough Manager To Enter Into The Grant Agreement For The 2021 Transportation Infrastructure Package.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Cheyenne Heindel, Finance Director, 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 Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-116 and Resolution Serial No. 22-093. 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 22-117](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$250,000 From The Alaska State Department Of Military And Veteran's Affairs, Emergency Management Performance Grant Program; And Requesting A Reappropriation Of \$250,000 From The Emergency Management Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget For Emergency Management Wages And Benefits.

RS 22-095: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For A Grant In The Amount Of \$250,000 From The Alaska State Department Of Military And Veteran's Affairs, Emergency Management Performance Grant For Emergency Management Wages And Benefits.  
Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Cheyenne Heindel, Finance Director, 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 Sumner moved to adopt Ordinance Serial No. 22-117 and Resolution Serial No. 22-095. The motion passed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 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 person spoke to concerns with too much Assembly interference in the election process: Elsie O'Brien.

The following person spoke to concerns with the Iditarod Trail Burma Road Underpass: Donna DeFusco.

The following persons spoke to a severe code compliance issue: Cecelia Westhoff and Tom Westhoff.

The following person reminded the Assembly that they work for their constituents: Loy Thurman.

**D. CONSENT AGENDA**

**1. RESOLUTIONS**

[RS 22-100](#) A Resolution Directing The Manager To Prepare A 2023 Transportation Systems Package For Assembly Consideration In The Spring Of 2023.

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

## **2. ACTION MEMORANDUMS**

There were no action memorandums.

## **VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

## **IX. VETO**

There were no vetoes presented.

## **X. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. INTRODUCTIONS (For Public Hearing 10/18/22, Assembly Chambers)**

[RS 22-097](#) A Resolution Approving State Legislative Priorities For Fiscal Year 2024.

[RS 22-098](#) A Resolution Approving Federal Legislative Priorities For Fiscal Year 2024.

[OR 22-112](#) An Ordinance Approving An Appropriation Of \$1,500,000 From The West Lakes Fire Service Area Fund Balance To Purchase A New Pumper Tender.

RS 22-090: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For A Project To Purchase A New Pumper Tender For The West Lakes Fire Service Area.

[OR 22-120](#)

An Ordinance Approving An Appropriation Of \$161,904.10 From The Enhanced 911 Fund Balance, To A Project To Allow The City Of Wasilla To Obtain Reimbursement From The Enhanced 911 Surcharge Funding For A Backup Power Supply For The Mat-Com Dispatch Center.

RS 22-099: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget For A Project To Allow The City Of Wasilla To Obtain Reimbursement From The Enhanced 911 Surcharge Funding For A Backup Power Supply For The Mat-Com Dispatch Center.

[OR 22-121](#)

An Ordinance Accepting And Appropriating \$6,696,030 From The United States Department Of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, For The Gateway Visitor Center.

RS 22-101: A Resolution Approving The Scope Of Work And Budget, And Authorizing The Manager To Enter Into The Grant Agreement For The Gateway Visitor Center.

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 October 18, 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**

[22-149](#)

Mayoral Requests For Confirmation

Greater Butte RSA No. 26

Mike Shields, resignation

**Assemblymember Sumner moved to confirm the resignation as requested by the Mayor. The motion passed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 7 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Assemblymember Yundt, Assemblymember Tew, Assemblymember Sumner, 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.

### **XI. RECONSIDERATION**

There were no reconsiderations.

### **XII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS**

Assemblymember McKee noted the importance of agreeing to disagree.

Assemblymember Bernier thanked the body for their support of Ordinance Serial No. 22-119 and said a prayer

Mr. Brown advised that an inventory of the Emergency Services Department equipment was just done last year. Stated that he will ensure it is updated and get it to the Assembly tomorrow. Stated that the Alaska State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities will be conducting an open house on October 13, 2022, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Pioneer Peak Elementary, regarding the Bogard Road at Engstrom Road/Green Forest Drive Intersection Improvements Project. Noted that the State and Federal priorities legislation will be up for public hearing on October 18. Requested that if the Assembly has any amendments to either of those resolutions, to please let him know in advance of the meeting.

Assemblymember Nowers spoke in support of public participation. Spoke to the need to have fair and transparent elections. Shared that the city of Palmer will be having a meeting regarding vagrancy on October 14, 2022, at 6 p.m.

### **XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no executive session conducted.

### **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.