

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SPECIAL MEETING  
ASSEMBLY MAY 8, 2001

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on May 8, 2001, at the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly Chambers, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Timothy L. Anderson. The purpose of the meeting was to hold public hearings on the FY 02 annual budget.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Larry DeVilbiss, Assembly District No. 1  
Ms. Sara Jansen, Assembly District No. 2 (Deputy Mayor)  
Mr. Talis J. Colberg, Assembly District No. 3  
Mr. Dan Kelly, Assembly District No. 4  
Ms. Jody Simpson, Assembly District No. 5  
Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District No. 6  
Ms. Kelly Lankford Ladere, Assembly District No. 7

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Sandra Dillon, Borough Clerk  
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager  
Mr. Michael Gatti, Borough Attorney  
Ms. Elizabeth Manfred, Deputy Borough Clerk  
Ms. Tammy Clayton, Finance Director  
Ms. Joell Church, Borough Clerk's Office

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Peter Burchell, a member of the audience.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. REVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2002 BUDGET

(There was no unfinished business remaining as departmental presentations for the FY 02 budget have been completed.)

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Beginning at 7 p.m. - Three minutes per person.)

**SUSPEND THE RULES:** Mayor Anderson requested a suspension of the rules to begin public testimony on the budget ordinance before 7 p.m. as there were so many people already in attendance. The assembly had no objections and Mayor Anderson reopened the public hearing at 6:15 p.m. for Ordinance Serial No. 01-028. (Public hearing was continued from May 3, 2001.)

**B. Ordinance Serial No. 01-028: AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING MONIES FROM THE CENTRAL TREASURY AND ESTABLISHING THE RATE OF LEVY FOR ALL BOROUGH FUNCTIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2001, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2002.**

Mayor Anderson:

- explained the sign-in procedures for public testimony; and
- announced that Friends of the Mat-Su (FROMS) were conducting a visual preference study in the building and encouraged people to contact Michelle Church in the foyer for additional information.

Mr. Duffy spoke to the annual budget process.

Mia Mangione:

- requested additional funds for the Talkeetna Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

Patricia Chesbro, Superintendent, Matanuska-Susitna School District

- read communication from Helene Brooks into the record requesting increased school funding;
- stated that all high schools offer at least one foreign language;
- commented that calculus and trigonometry are not available at all high schools;
- discussed reducing the pupil to teacher ratio in the current classroom space available; and
- noted that the school board determines which programs are cut or restored in response to funding available.

Liza Albert, Youth Court Program Coordinator:

- requested that the borough provide \$40,000 funding for the youth court program;
- noted that the youth court handled 150 cases in the year 2000;
- shared that the city of Wasilla provided free rent and computer assistance for the youth court program;
- commented that the Wasilla Police Department contributed in-kind services; and
- said that the proposed FY 01 budget for the youth court program is \$160,000.

The following spoke in support of additional funding for the emergency medical services programs: Don Savage and Jessica Blake.

Michelle Church:

- requested that the assembly fund a new position for an additional borough planner.

The following spoke in support of funding for youth court: Jim Messick and Heather Sheldon.

Peter Burchell:

- requested full funding for the schools; and
- encouraged the assembly to provide financial assistance to the youth court program.

The special assembly meeting recessed at 6:55 p.m. and reconvened at 7:05 p.m.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Beginning at 7 p.m. - Three minutes per person.)

A. Ordinance Serial No. 01-068: AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$145,956 FROM THE AREAWIDE FUND BALANCE, FUND 100, TO THE SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND, FUND 400, FOR THE ADDITIONAL ISSUANCE COSTS RELATED TO THE 2001 SERIES A GENERAL OBLIGATION SCHOOL COSTS.

1. Ordinance Serial 01-069: AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$129,950 TO FUND 440, RECREATIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS, FOR THE ISSUANCE COSTS RELATED TO THE 2001 SERIES B GENERAL OBLIGATION PARKS AND RECREATION BONDS.

IM No. 01-105

Mr. Duffy commented spoke to the revised official financial statements.

Mayor Anderson opened the public hearing. There being no one who wished to be heard, the public hearing was closed and discussion moved to the assembly.

MOTION: Assemblymember Jansen moved for adoption of Ordinance Serial Nos. 01-068 and 069.

GENERAL CONSENT: The motion passed without objection.

B. Ordinance Serial No. 01-028: AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING MONIES FROM THE CENTRAL

TREASURY AND ESTABLISHING THE RATE OF LEVY FOR ALL BOROUGH FUNCTIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2001, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2002.

Mayor Anderson reopened the public hearing on Ordinance Serial No. 01-028.

The following spoke in favor of funding education to the maximum allowable by statute: Janet Kincaid, Gary Feaster, Mark Fiselski, Barbara Morris (MEA President), Bev Nash, Kris Moore, Michelle Eastham, Kris Forester, Gil Serrano, Amelia Sharrer, Kristin Fry, Ruth McMuller, Melonna Miles, Donna Pearson, Dan Blanton, Josh Kluder, Chad Grasmick, and Kristin Wien.

Brian Gerry, Associated General Contractors of Alaska:

- read a letter from Richard Cattnach urging support for education and vocational education funding; and
- addressed the need to maintain vocational education programs within the borough.

The following spoke in favor of full funding for EMS: Cheri Day, Cami Zobel, Elsa Akres, Milton Lum, Melonna Miles, and Alex Miller.

Betty Vehrs asked the assembly to fund an additional animal care position.

Discussion followed on the responsibilities of the animal care staff and the feasibility of a crematorium at the borough animal shelter.

The assembly applauded Betty Vehrs for her volunteer efforts and continued support of the animal care program.

Jim Johnson, Chief, Wasilla Ambulance Service:

- noted that EMS is funded from areawide monies;
- spoke to the lack of advanced EMS training within the state of Alaska;
- suggested that service areas be established for EMS and funded in the same manner as other borough service areas; and
- asked that a portion of the revenues generated by ambulance calls be returned to EMS to fund training, supplies, and equipment.

Rena Ogle:

- read a citizen petition supporting a borough wide sales tax to fund education.

Discussion followed on whether a constitutional prohibition on the dedication of taxes applies to municipal governments.

Diana Straub:

- stated support for establishment of a sales tax to fund education;
- requested that the assembly establish funding for EMS personnel; and
- suggested that revenues from building permits partially fund education.

(Currently the borough does not issue building permits.)

Judy Masteller:

- supported a sales tax dedicated to education funding; and
- voiced non-support of any property tax increases.

Joan Westall:

- requested that the assembly fund an additional animal care position;
- commented that the animal care facility should extend the hours of operation; and
- spoke to the financial benefits of an animal crematorium.

There being no others who wished to be heard, the public hearing was closed and discussion moved to the assembly.

Mr. Duffy:

- reviewed the borough E 9-1-1 system;
- noted that the borough will receive approximately an additional \$85,000 in municipal assistance and revenue sharing;
- spoke to the proposed reductions for the operating budget;
- explained the transfer of lapsed funds from completed capital projects; and
- presented four proposed budget scenarios and the corresponding mill rates.

Discussion followed concerning the scenarios presented.

Assemblymember Colberg requested that the administration prepare a scenario with \$28 million for school funding and with no reductions to borough funding.

MOTION: Assemblymember Jansen moved a primary amendment to approve the technical corrections presented by administration:

(1) Increase state revenues for legislative amendments in areawide revenues (page B-12) by \$85,250 for an adjusted amount of \$867,850, and non-areawide revenues (page D-9) by \$3,650 for an adjusted amount of \$37,150.

(2) Correct pool revenues (page B-14):

- (a) increase Palmer pool by \$8,000 for an adjusted amount of \$208,000
- (b) increase Wasilla Pool by \$7,000 for an adjusted amount of \$212,000

(3) Adjust expenditures in the areawide fund:

- (a) reduce funding necessary for building repairs (page B-16) by \$25,000 for an adjusted amount of \$2,113,668
- (b) reduce port professional charges (page B-38) by \$85,423 for an adjusted amount of \$66,577 and instead increase wages and benefits (page B-37) by a corresponding amount for a new Port/Economic Development Specialist

(4) Add travel and training for the Community Development Department (page B-123/124) inadvertently excluded in original budget:

- 414-200 \$5,170
- 414-400 \$2,850
- 429-200 \$5,600

(5) Land Management Fund:

- (a) reduce wages and benefits in Land Division (page F-11)
- (b) increase wages and benefits in Asset Management and Development Division for the Land Management Specialist which more appropriately belongs in Asset Management and not Lands.

MOTION: Assemblymember Lankford Ladere moved to divide the question so as to consider separately item 3(a), reduce funding necessary for building repairs (page B-16) by \$25,000 for an adjusted total amount of \$2,113,668, on May 10, 2001.

GENERAL CONSENT: The motion, to divide the question, passed without objection and item 3(a) will be addressed on May 10, 2001.

GENERAL CONSENT: The technical amendments were adopted without objection

Ms. Clayton:

- spoke to debt service and identified the five individual budgets:
  - debt service on the school bonds including bond issued since 1990 (page A-3),
  - debt service for accumulated costs for landfill closure (page K-7),
  - debt service for the Circle View Service Area (page K-11 and K-15),
  - debt service for certificates of participation (page K-19), and
  - debt service for parks and recreation bonds (page K-25)

Discussion followed on the possibilities of refinancing any of the debt service.

Assemblymember Colver requested that the assembly explore the issue of combining emergency medical services and fire area services. A work session will be scheduled to discuss this topic.

## VI. MAYOR AND ASSEMBLY COMMENTS

Ms. Dillon noted the special assembly meeting scheduled May 10, 2001, to adopt the budget.

Assemblymember Colver:

- commented regarding a proposal for a bike trail from Palmer to the Butte.

Assemblymember DeVilbiss:

- requested that administration prepare a budget scenario with full funding for EMS; and
- queried the total assessed valuation of new construction during FY01.

Assemblymember Lankford Ladere:

- extended her compliments to the mayor for his approach with the public hearings and discussion.

Mayor Anderson:

- identified the borough's map revisions to the state redistricting proposal;
- appreciated the budget discussion;
- requested that administration prepare a budget scenario with full funding for the schools and no borough funding cuts;
- requested that administration prepare a budget scenario with full funding for the schools and borough funding cuts; and
- spoke to the procedure to make amendments for budget items on May 10, 2001.

## VII. ADJOURNMENT

The special assembly meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

---

TIMOTHY L. ANDERSON, Borough Mayor  
ATTEST:

---

SANDRA A. DILLON, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: June 5, 2001