

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on April 27, 2010, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Mayor Talis J. Colberg for the purpose of holding public hearings for Ordinance Serial No. 10-010, fiscal year 2011 budget.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Ms. Lynne Woods, Assembly District No. 1 (*Deputy Mayor*)
Mr. Pete Houston, Assembly District No. 2
Mr. Ronald Arvin, Assembly District No. 3
Mr. Mark Ewing, Assembly District No. 4
Ms. Cindy L. Bettine, Assembly District No. 5 (*arrived at 6:09 p.m.*)
Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District No. 6
Mr. Vern Halter, Assembly District No. 7

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Lonnie R. McKechnie, Borough Clerk
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager
Ms. Elizabeth Gray, Assistant Borough Manager
Mr. Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney
Ms. Cheryl D. Marino, Deputy Borough Clerk
Ms. Tammy Clayton, Finance Director
Mr. Dennis Brodigan, Emergency Services Director
Ms. Patty Sullivan, Public Affairs Director
Mr. Dave Hanson, Economic Development Director
Ms. Shaune O'Neil, Public Works Director
Ms. Christine Nelson, Planning and Land Use Director
Ms. Shannon Shilman, Chief Information Officer

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Colberg inquired if there were any changes to the agenda.

GENERAL CONSENT: The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Dennis Brodigan, Emergency Services Director.

V. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Ordinance Serial No. 10-010: AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING MONIES FROM THE CENTRAL TREASURY FOR THE BOROUGH OPERATING FUNDS, EDUCATION OPERATING FUND, ENTERPRISE FUNDS, AND CAPITAL FUNDS, AND ESTABLISHING THE RATE OF LEVY FOR ALL BOROUGH FUNCTIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2010, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2011.

Mayor Colberg opened the public hearing.

The following person spoke in opposition to funding farmland: Mr. Arthur Hippler.

The following person spoke to the need for less spending and the need to decrease taxes: Mr. David Jenkins.

The following person spoke regarding funding the School District's budget to the state of Alaska cap, concerns regarding the School District struggling to make ends meet, and concerns with pay rate differences between similar positions at the Borough and the School District: Mr. Ron Rucker.

The following person spoke regarding appreciating the Assembly holding the mill rate level in fiscal year 2010, spoke to the need for the Assembly to show that they have held the costs down as much as possible before trying to sell an increase of taxes to the public, spoke to the minority reports of the Commission on Salaries and Emoluments, and noted that the farmland funding could have been better spent elsewhere: Mr. John Wood.

The following person spoke in opposition to any budget increases, spoke to an Anchorage Daily News article regarding property taxes, spoke to concerns with the School District's budget per student amount being too high, spoke in opposition to the farmland development rights purchase, and spoke to the reserves funding: Mr. Frank Bettine.

The following person spoke regarding concerns with irresponsible spending, spoke in opposition to the farmland development rights purchase, and concerns with the Assembly not being good stewards of public funds: Mr. Keith Simmons.

The following person spoke regarding income received from the oil fields, the need for the Assembly to budget for what the Borough has; concerns regarding people losing their homes due to taxation: Mr. Anthony McNabb.

The following person spoke in support of full funding for the School District and spoke to concerns regarding the School District receiving less each year: Mr. Rick Burns.

The following person spoke to concerns regarding the Borough spending money to fund a ski lift at Hatcher Pass with no progress and spoke in support of full funding for the School District: Mr. Earl Almdale.

Mayor Colberg asked if there was objection to continuing the public hearing for Ordinance Serial No. 10-010 to May 6, 2010 at 6 p.m. at the Central Public Safety Building in Wasilla.

There was no objection noted.

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

(There was no one present who wished to testify.)

VII. MAYOR AND ASSEMBLY COMMENTS

Assemblymember Bettine requested that the Assembly receive information regarding the Manager's proposed increases and the estimated cost per student within the proposed fiscal year 2011 budget.

Ms. Clayton provided a report on the proposed increases.

Assemblymember Colver:

- spoke in support of using the fiscal year 2010 budget as a baseline;
- spoke to the need to hold the line on the budget and prioritize;
- spoke to the need for the Assembly to take a serious look at the School District's budget;
- spoke to the need to leave some flexibility for next year as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) School District funding will be depleted next year;
- spoke to how the School District differs from other districts in regards to the use of ARRA funding;
- noted that he would like to know more about the ferry enterprise fund; and
- requested a breakdown of the Borough's bonded indebtedness payments.

Assemblymember Houston:

- spoke to previously requesting a presentation regarding the comparison of the revenue cap and the maximum cap for the School District funding; and
- asked when the information would be provided.

Mr. Duffy advised that the information would be provided at the next meeting

Assemblymember Halter requested information regarding where the \$3,300,000 increase in the budget is derived from.

Assemblymember Ewing:

- spoke to the Assembly working hard to decrease the fiscal year 2010 budget;
- stated that most of the Assembly are looking at finding ways to reduce excess spending;
- spoke in opposition to the farmland funding;
- stated that he stood firmly opposed to the sales tax;
- spoke to fiscal year 2011 budget line items;
- commented that the Assembly is looking to keep the budget down;

- stated that government's purpose is to provide education, public service, and infrastructure; and
- spoke to the need for the Assembly to get back to basics and do what government is supposed to do.

Assemblymember Arvin:

- noted that the budget is not a simple task;
- stated that there are items in the proposed fiscal year 2011 budget that affect the core objectives that the Assembly is supposed to be providing being education, infrastructure, public safety, and health;
- stated that he does not like that the fiscal year 2011 proposed budget was presented to the Assembly at nearly \$6,000,000 over last year's budget;
- spoke in support of the fiscal year 2011 budget starting at zero and then adding to it;
- stated that there are too many economic challenges that everyone is facing today;
- spoke to cutting his personal budget and businesses cutting their budgets; and
- opined that it is shameful to add to the fiscal year 2011 budget.

Mayor Colberg:


- noted that the fiscal year 2011 budget is a proposed budget and is not the end budget;
- stated that it is clear that some support increasing the budget and some support decreasing the budget; and
- spoke to the public process of the budget.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

ATTEST:


TALIS J. COLBERG, Borough Mayor


LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: 06/01/10