

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on May 12, 2005, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Mayor Timothy L. Anderson for the purpose of holding a public hearing on the budget.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Ms. Lynne Woods, Assembly District No. 1
Ms. Mary Kvalheim, Assembly District No. 4
Ms. Jody Simpson, Assembly District No. 5
Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District 6 (*Deputy Mayor*) (*arrived at 7:10 p.m.*)
Ms. Betty Vehrs, Assembly District No. 7

Assembly members absent and excused were:

Mr. Bill Allen, Assembly District No. 2
Mr. Talis J. Colberg, Assembly District No. 3

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Michelle M. McGehee, CMC, Borough Clerk
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager
Ms. Janice A. Case, Deputy Borough Clerk
Ms. Cheyenne Heindel, Financial Analyst
Mr. Dennis Brodigan, Emergency Services Director
Mr. Ron Swanson, Community Development Director
Mr. Murph O'Brien, Planning and Land Use Director

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Anderson inquired if there were any additional 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. Gilbert Lucero, a member of the audience.

V. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Ordinance Serial No. 05-005: 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, 2005 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2006.

Mayor Anderson re-opened the public hearing.

The following persons spoke in support of funding the Mat-Su Youth Court: Ms. Lisa Albert-Konecky, Ms. Erin Kelahan, Mr. Devin Warburton, Mr. Jonathan Woyke, and Ms. Heather Sheldon.

The following person spoke in support of the proposed software package in the Assessments Division: Ms. Jennifer Carper.

The following person discussed the successes and failures of the previous Borough budget: Mr. Penny Nixon.

The following person spoke in support of the proposed Benefits – Accounting Assistant II position: Ms. Lisa Reeves.

The following person stated that property taxes are currently too high: Mr. Alan Butts.

The following person spoke in support of the proposed Buyer position: Mr. Todd Lindstrom.

The following persons spoke in support of the additional staff and long-term planning efforts for the Planning Department: Mr. Doug Wright, on behalf of Ms. Teresa Fredrickson.

The following person spoke in support of fully funding education: Ms. Kathy Summers, President of Mat-Su Education Association; Ms. Amy Spargo, Wasilla Middle School Principal.

The following person voiced concern regarding the lack of full funding for the School District: Mr. Rex Wertz.

The following person spoke in support of fully funding education and discussed possible alternative revenue sources: Ms. Mary Kate Mayer.

The following person spoke regarding the increased assessments: Mr. Mark Mendoza.

The following persons spoke in support of the pay increase and health benefits for the emergency service responders: Mr. John Ditzler, Mr. John Beebe, Ms. Micheal Salmon, Mr. Robert Hicks, Mr. Chuck Carver, Mr. Charles Williams, Mr. Luke Szipszky, Ms. Ulla Stice, Ms. Darby Sullivan, Mr. Travis Heintzman, and Ms. Rose Marie Teich.

The following person spoke in support of the proposed projects in the budget for the Office of Information Technology: Mr. Jack Horner.

The following person spoke regarding alternative sources of revenue: Mr. Gilbert Lucero.

Ms. Annette Harpster:

- spoke regarding the proposed increase in the budget from last year;
- stated that the School District needs to be accountable; and
- discussed decreasing the retirement contribution for the employees.

The following person spoke in opposition to the proposed budget and discussed the increasing growth in the Borough and the increasing number of students: Ms. Carolyn Frey.

The following person spoke in opposition to increasing the taxes: Mr. Christopher Adcock.

The following person spoke regarding the increased assessments and reducing taxes: Mr. Jerry Alley.

The following person discussed the increasing tax burden on property owners: Mr. Phillip Furbush.

The following person discussed the growth in the Borough and spoke in support of the proposed full-time office assistant position in the Planning Department: Ms. Sandra Jensen.

(The regular meeting recessed at 8:30 p.m. and reconvened at 8:50 p.m.)

The following person stated that taxes are high enough: Mr. Mark Lillan.

The following person spoke regarding a progressive income tax to pay for government: Mr. Clarence Furbush.

The following person spoke regarding the increased assessments and in opposition to higher taxes: Mr. Pat Marley.

The following person discussed the growth in the Borough and spoke in support of the additional positions proposed in the budget: Mr. Harry Banks.

The following person discussed having a sales tax in place of property taxes: Mr. Pio Cottini.

The following person spoke in opposition to additional School District funding: Mr. Link Fannon.

The following person spoke in support of the School District's proposed budget and discussed heritage foundations: Ms. Kris Moore.

The following person stated that the Borough needed to cut expenses and not raise taxes: Ms. Mary Psenak.

The following person spoke regarding diversifying revenue sources: Ms. Kim Floyd.

The following person spoke to the School District being accountable: Mr. Greg Beminack.

The following person discussed the increasing student population, the growth in the Borough, and the obligations associated with the growth: Mr. Mark Paiger.

The following person spoke in opposition to additional School District funding: Ms. Lucille Frey.

There being no others present who wished to testify, Mayor Anderson closed the public hearing.

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The following person discussed the ranking of the United States in comparison with other countries in education: Mr. Penny Nixon.

The following person suggested that the School District go directly to the residents of the Borough for their funding request: Ms. Mary Psenak.

VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Ms. McGehee thanked the members of her staff, Karl Augestad from Action Video, Chief Krill, and Mr. Brodigan for their assistance with the meeting and for the use of the facility.

Mr. Duffy discussed his recent trip to Juneau and reviewed the projects that were discussed with the Legislative Delegation.

The members of the Assembly thanked the members of the public for attending the meeting and providing input.

Assemblymember Colver:

- discussed his recent trip to Juneau;
- stated that it was important that the Borough had representatives present for the close of the session;
- noted that the Enhanced 911 bill passed with the language removed as the Assembly had requested;
- asked the Finance Department to prepare amendments to the budget changing the life of a computer to a five-year cycle; and
- noted that he is looking for alternative revenue sources.

Mayor Anderson:

- noted that the Assembly will be deliberating the budget on May 24 and May 26;
- reminded the members of the Assembly to give their amendments to the Clerk to prepare;
- stated that it was beneficial to have representatives from the Borough in Juneau;
- stated that the Borough received a lot of capital funds this year; and
- thanked the members of the public for attending the public hearings.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

/s/

TIMOTHY L. ANDERSON, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/

MICHELLE M. MCGEHEE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: June 7, 2005