

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on September 11, 2012, at the Mat-Su Borough School District Administration Building, 501 N. Gulkana Street, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 2 p.m. by Deputy Mayor Arvin for the purpose of conducting an Assembly planning session

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

- Mr. Warren Keogh, Assembly District No. 1
- Mr. Noel Woods, Assembly District No. 2
- Mr. Ronald Arvin, Assembly District No. 3 (*Deputy Mayor*)
- Mr. Steve Colligan, Assembly District No. 4 (*arrived at 2:14 p.m.*)
- Mr. Darcie K. Salmon, Assembly District No. 5
- Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District No. 6 (*arrived at 2:21 p.m.*)
- Mr. Vern Halter, Assembly District No. 7

Staff in attendance were:

- Ms. Lonnie McKechnie, Borough Clerk
- Mr. Nick Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney
- Ms. Tammy Clayton, Finance Director
- Ms. Sonya Conant, Human Resources Director
- Mr. George Hays, Assistant Borough Manager
- Ms. Shannon Post, Chief Information Officer
- Mr. Eric Phillips, Community Development Director
- Ms. Eileen Probasco, Acting Planning Director
- Mr. Dennis Brodigan, Emergency Services Director
- Ms. Shaune O'Neil, Public Works Director
- Mr. Don Dyer, Economic Development Director
- Ms. Ali Little, Executive Assistant to the Borough Manager

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Deputy Mayor Arvin queried if there were any changes to the agenda.

Assemblymember Woods requested to hear audience participation immediately following the pledge of allegiance.

Assemblymember Keogh:

- spoke to concerns with moving audience participation; and
- requested that audience participation be held as requested by Assemblymember Woods, as well as after the Committee of the Whole.

Deputy Mayor Arvin queried if there were any objections to holding two audience participations.

There was no objection noted.

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

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mr. George Hays, Assistant Borough Manager.

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The following person provided a report on the issue of salmon runs within the Borough: Mr. Bruce Knowles, Matanuska-Susitna Fish and Wildlife Commission Chair.

V. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

1. ASSEMBLY PLANNING SESSION

MOTION: Assemblymember Salmon moved to enter into the committee of the whole.

VOTE: The motion passed without objection and the Assembly moved into the Committee of the Whole at 2:22 p.m.

Discussion ensued regarding legislative priorities.

(Mayor DeVilbiss entered the meeting at 2:25 p.m. and assumed the duties of the Chair.)

(During the Committee of the Whole the Assembly recessed at 3:24 p.m. and reconvened at 3:33 p.m.)

Mayor DeVilbiss queried if there was any objection to exiting the Committee of the Whole.

There was no objection noted and the Assembly exited the Committee of the Whole at 3:55 p.m.

MOTION: Assemblymember Arvin moved to include the following list of priorities for the Governor's budget:

- Rail Extension - \$126.5 million;
- Port Expansion/Protection - \$5.5 million;
- Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority;
- Bogard Road Extension – \$19.5 million; and
- Matanuska-Susitna Borough Salmon Restoration/Fish Management Studies.

MOTION: Assemblymember Keogh moved a primary amendment to prioritize the priorities for the Governor's budget as follows:

1. Rail Extension - \$126.5 million;
2. Port Expansion/Protection - \$5.5 million;
3. Matanuska-Susitna Borough Salmon Restoration/Fish Management Studies;
4. Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority; and
5. Bogard Road Extension - \$19.5 million.

VOTE: The primary amendment passed with Assemblymembers Colligan and Salmon opposed.

VOTE: The main motion passed as amended without objection.

MOTION: Assemblymember Halter moved to have the legislative priorities before the Assembly by October 16, 2012.

VOTE: The motion passed without objection.

Assemblymember Colligan stated that he would like to conduct a formal planning session with a facilitator sometime in November.

Ms. McKechnie queried if the body would like her to bring back a date for November at the next meeting.

There was no objection noted.

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

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

VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Spiropoulos:

- stated that the Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission is an advisory board;
- spoke to concerns that they may have overstepped their boundaries, as they are to move forward through Administration rather than by presenting to the State Board of Fisheries on their own; and
- noted that the State is following the fish management plan as it is currently written.

Assemblymember Colligan:

- stated that he would like to engage in the process of fish management;
- noted that he would like to understand the true minimum of fish escapement; and
- opined that whether or not it is included in the Governor's budget, the body needs to address the issue.

Assemblymember Keogh stated that he would like to respectfully note that setting legislative priorities is a function of the Assembly and that the Mayor should not have participated in their selection.

Mayor DeVilbiss noted his agreement and stated he would not have participated if the body were not in Committee of the Whole.

Assemblymember Arvin:

- stated that the body has weighed in heavily on fish management issues;
- opined that the issue should be pursued even more;
- noted that he has been asked to participate in the selection of the State Lobbyist; and
- stated that he has no interest in being involved in ranking the proposals.

Mayor DeVilbiss stated that the body has always participated in the selection of the State Lobbyist to a certain extent.

Assemblymember Keogh queried if there would be any unintended legal consequences by the Assembly being involved.

Mr. Spiropoulos:

- spoke to ways that proposals have been ranked in the past;
- noted that the body has been asked to perform that duty;
- advised that in 2006, the Assembly did do the rankings;
- stated that doing so is an Administrative action, not a legislative one;
- advised that there is no immunity in participating in the ranking; and
- noted that the body could request that the Manager review the rankings and present the top selection to the body for evaluation.

Assemblymember Colligan opined that the Assembly would be the most skilled in ranking the proposals and queried the length of the contract.

Mr. Moosey stated that the State Lobbyist contract is for four years.

Assemblymember Halter stated that he is not interested in making the selection, only with how skilled the person selected would be.

Assemblymember Colligan opined that it is difficult to find a singular person who has the skills necessary.


Assemblymember Arvin stated that he has no problem approving the final contract.

Mr. Moosey noted that the body could assign a subcommittee of members to evaluate the ranking.

Ms. McKechnie advised that in the past, the Assembly members have reviewed the rankings individually, rather than as a subcommittee.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.


LARRY DeVILBISS, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


DONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 10/16/12