

SUBJECT: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH TO ISSUE AREAWIDE GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS IN THE AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED \$58,146,600, TO FINANCE THE ACQUISITION, DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, MAJOR RENOVATION AND RENEWAL OF EDUCATIONAL AND RELATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN THE BOROUGH, AND TO SUBMIT THE QUESTION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS TO THE QUALIFIED VOTERS OF THE BOROUGH AT THE NOVEMBER 5, 2024, BOROUGH REGULAR ELECTION.

AGENDA OF: July 16, 2024

ASSEMBLY ACTION: Adopted without objection 08/06/24 - BJH

AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED: Introduce and set for public hearing.

Route To	Signatures
Originator	7/2/2024 X N S for Assm Yundt Signed by: Nicholas Spiropoulos
Finance Director	7/2/2024 X Cheyenne Heindel Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel
Borough Attorney	7/2/2024 X Nicholas Spiropoulos Signed by: Nicholas Spiropoulos
Borough Manager	7/2/2024 X Michael Brown Signed by: Mike Brown
Borough Clerk	7/2/2024 X Estelle Wiese for Lonnie Mc... Signed by: Estelle Wiese

ATTACHMENT (S) : Ordinance Serial No. 24-072 (9 pp)

SUMMARY STATEMENT: This ordinance is sponsored by Assemblymember Yundt to issue general obligation bonds in the amount of \$58,146,600 to finance public charter schools and place the question before the voters at the November 5, 2024 Regular Borough Election.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly recognizes the important educational choices provided by public charter schools within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District. In particular, the below public charter schools are in need of additional financial support to complete the improvements, acquisitions, or new school construction. These public charter schools continue to have strong

enrollment year after year, growing waitlists of students interested in attending, and have been in existence for extended periods of time. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly recognizes the long term benefit of owning public charter school facilities and also recognizes the benefits of being able to have facilities better suited for the educational mission of each public charter school.

It is the intent of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly that all of the public charter schools involved contribute 12.5% of their annual operating budget to participate in paying the debt service attributable to their school regardless of whether they are currently making a lease payment. As enrollment increases for each school the annual operating budget will increase and this will lead to a higher payment to participate in the debt payoff. However, such participation will never exceed the debt payment attributable to that particular school.

THE SCHOOLS

1) Academy Charter School is a public school of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District. Academy Charter desires to expand its educational program to serve additional students in its K-8 program, and to also grow its operations to begin serving students in grades 9-12. To provide more services to the existing K-8 program, and account for a new 9-12 program, the school will require an addition to support the needed education space. Academy Charter School is located on Borough owned land with no annual lease payment and the existing site has space to accommodate new facilities.

Over the previous 26 years, Academy Charter School has overcome many challenges to create safe classrooms for its students. They began in a leased space the first year. In the second year, the families and staff remodeled five dilapidated portable classrooms and were provided with a temporary home at the Palmer Fire Training Center. In 2001, 8 portables were moved into place at the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Maintenance Site. That location was eventually approved by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly as Academy Charter School's permanent school location. In 2005, the Alaska Legislature provided Academy Charter School with a direct \$2.5 million appropriation. In 2010, a second direct appropriation by the Alaska Legislature of \$2 million was provided. In 2012, a final direct appropriation of \$2 million was given. As a result of those allocations, a 44,560-sf building was constructed to house students attending K-8th grade. In 2022, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board approved Academy Charter School to expand to include 9-12th grades. In June 2022, the State approved the expansion of Academy Charter School to include 9-12th grades.

The projected enrollment for Academy Charter School is 266 students and a waitlist of 225. The proposed new building will be 29,700 SF to allow for a total enrollment of 446 students. The added capacity for 180 additional students is will allow expansion of the K-8 program to significantly reduce the K-8 waitlist and allow for a 9-12 educational program as well. The existing site is large enough to accommodate the proposed improvements.

The current operating budget of Academy Charter School is approximately \$3,347,007. While the full faith and credit of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough will be pledged to pay the bonds, it is anticipated that at the current budget, Academy Charter School will contribute approximately \$418,376 of the total \$1,262,369 debt payment attributable to their facility. As enrollment increases, the operating budget will increase and this will lead to a higher payment to participate in the debt payoff. However, such participation will never exceed the debt payment attributable to Academy Charter School.

2) American Charter Academy is a public school of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District. American Charter Academy is in need of a permanent facility which will better suit its educational program. The current leased facility is a converted strip mall which has many limitations connected to the school's operational model. The current lease costs approximately \$282,000 annually. Borough owned land is already set aside for a permanent location for American Charter Academy and the school has already paid for most of a new school design.

American Charter Academy is currently housed in several units of an existing strip mall. The site is located near the intersection of the Parks Highway and Pittman Road, in Meadow Lakes. The existing building and infrastructure are inadequate to accommodate the school population. The building's condition is below established district expectations and was not originally designed to accommodate an academic institution. The staff have modified several existing spaces but are still unable to fulfill their instructional program needs. The school's parking space and grounds are severely limited and have created safety concerns that staff must continually mitigate. A new location has already been approved by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly. The new location is a 20-acre parcel, near the intersection of Church and Seldon Roads. The location allows for improved traffic circulation, student safety, and has adequate outdoor space to accommodate recreational needs.

The projected enrollment for American Charter Academy is 188 students. The proposed new building will be 29,300 SF to allow for a total enrollment of 288. With a new facility to better meet educational needs it is anticipated that demand for the school's

services will grow. It is important to note that American Charter Academy has already paid \$651,000 towards a design and thus demonstrated a willingness to participate in the project expenses.

The current operating budget of American Charter Academy is approximately \$2,739,243. While the full faith and credit of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough will be pledged to pay the bonds, it is anticipated that at the current budget, American Charter Academy will contribute approximately \$342,405 of the total \$1,172,433 debt payment attributable to their facility. Since American Charter Academy already pays \$281,596 to lease the current facilities, this contribution represents a modest increase in their payments for space as long as the bonds are being paid off. As enrollment increases, the annual operating budget will increase and this will lead to a higher payment to participate in the debt payoff. However, such participation will never exceed the debt payment attributable to American Charter Academy.

3) Birchtree Charter School is a public school of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District. Birchtree Charter School is in need of a permanent facility to support the Waldorf model of education. The current leased facilities have recently been sold which will require Birchtree to find another location for their school in any event. The current lease costs approximately \$586,200 annually. Borough owned land is already set aside for a permanent location for Birchtree Charter School.

Birchtree Charter School currently leases a building at 7000 E. Wonder Circle. The existing building and infrastructure are inadequate to accommodate the current population and anticipated growth. The school has grown from 200+ students in 2010, to a current enrollment of over 400 students. Two additions and two portables have been added to the original building to help meet student and program needs. The original building is of an economical design and is in a constant state of disrepair. The parking lot is inadequate for the growing population and causes safety concerns for the school and the surrounding community. Even if the building were suitable, it is of little consequence since the building has been sold and a new facility is needed. A new location has been approved by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly. The new location is a 68-acre parcel owned by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough which adjoins Shaw Elementary School. The location is in a large, wooded area that would allow for improved traffic flow and accommodate outdoor learning opportunities.

The projected enrollment for Birchtree Charter School is 430 students with a waitlist of 133. The proposed building will be 49,000 SF to allow for a total enrollment of 530 students. The added capacity will significantly decrease and possibly eliminate

the waitlist.

The current operating budget of Birchtree Charter School is approximately \$5,035,568. While the full faith and credit of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough will be pledged to pay the bonds, it is anticipated that at the current budget, Birchtree Charter School will contribute approximately \$629,446 of the total \$1,964,988 debt payment attributable to their facility. Since Birchtree Charter School already pays \$586,200 to lease the current facilities, this contribution represents a modest increase in their payments for space as long as the bonds are being paid off. As enrollment increases, the annual operating budget will increase and this will lead to a higher payment to participate in the debt payoff. However, such participation will never exceed the debt payment attributable to Birchtree Charter School.

Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District has supported placing a bond proposition before the voters via Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board Resolution 24-003.

THE PROJECTS

The projects to be presented to the voters are as follows:

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST TO TAXPAYER PER \$100,000 ASSESSED VALUE
Academy Charter School	\$16,394,400	\$9.02
American Charter Academy	\$15,155,000	\$8.36
Birchtree Charter School	\$26,597,200	\$14.02
Total	\$58,146,600	\$31.40

The annual payment on the total debt service of \$58,146,600 is estimated to be approximately \$4,399,790 which corresponds to .314 mils under the FY2024 areawide real property mill rate. Since the full faith and credit of the Borough is being used to secure the bonds, the voters will be presented this information to assure the bond holders that payment will be made and, if necessary, taxes raised accordingly.

However, participation by the schools toward the debt service will be 12.5% of their annual operating budgets. Currently, this total contribution would be approximately \$1,390,227 (but this number

will grow as the schools' operating budgets grow). This equates to a .099 mil contribution from the schools. Therefore, the net increase to the areawide real property mil rate to pay for the debt service could be limited to a .215 increase. As the school enrollment increases and their budgets grow, their participation will increase. This could result in even less of an increase to the areawide real property mil rate.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION: Introduce and set for public hearing.

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

FISCAL NOTE

Agenda Date: July 16, 2024

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FISCAL ACTION (TO BE COMPLETED BY FINANCE)	FISCAL IMPACT YES NO
AMOUNT REQUESTED *to be determined*	FUNDING SOURCE 2024 Series GO Bonds
FROM ACCOUNT #	PROJECT
TO ACCOUNT: 410.000.000 3xx.xxx	PROJECT # TBD
VERIFIED BY: X Liesel W eiland Signed by: Liesel W eiland	

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:

(Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029
Personnel Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land/Structures						
Grants, Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING						

CAPITAL		TBD				
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REVENUE						
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FUNDING:

(Thousands of Dollars)

General Fund						
State/Federal Funds						
Other		TBD				
TOTAL		TBD				

POSITIONS:

Full-Time						
Part-Time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary) * the maximum amount to be issued is \$58,146,600

APPROVED BY:	 X Cheyenne Heindel Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel
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