

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on February 21, 2015, at Evangelo's Restaurant, 2530 E Parks Highway, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m. by Mayor Larry DeVilbiss for the purpose of holding an Assembly Planning Session.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Jim Sykes, Assembly District No. 1  
Mr. Matthew Beck, Assembly District No. 2  
Mr. Ronald Arvin, Assembly District No. 3 (*Deputy Mayor*)  
Mr. Steve Colligan, Assembly District No. 4  
Mr. Dan Mayfield, Assembly District No. 5  
Mr. Vern Halter, Assembly District No. 7

Assembly members absent and excused were:

Mr. Vern Halter, Assembly District No. 7

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Lonnie R. McKechnie, Borough Clerk  
Mr. John Moosey, Assistant Manager  
Mr. Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney  
Mr. George Hayes, Assistant Borough Manager  
Ms. Jamie Newman, Deputy Clerk  
Ms. Tammy Clayton, Finance Director  
Mr. Mike Brown, Capital Projects Director  
Mr. James Wilson, Internal Auditor

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor DeVilbiss 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 Wasilla Mayor Bert Cottle.

**V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

The following person spoke to concerns with public process: Mr. Eugene Haberman.

## VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

### A. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

#### 1. ASSEMBLY PLANNING SESSION

MOTION: Assemblymember Arvin moved to enter into a Committee of the Whole.

VOTE: The motion passed without objection.

Ms. Karen Kirk of Synergistic Solutions facilitated the meeting and the Assembly proceeded to establish priorities.

*(The meeting recessed at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 12:25 p.m.)*

*Assemblymember Colligan exited the meeting at 1:10 p.m.*

MOTION: Assemblymember Arvin moved to exit the Committee of the Whole.

VOTE: The motion passed without objection.

MOTION: Assemblymember Arvin moved to adopt the 2015 Assembly priorities as follows:

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Priority Focus

- Tax shift
- Fiscal solvency and mill rate
- Full funding for Administrative restructure

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority Focus

- Partnerships (with people taking ownership)
- Public Safety
- Land Management
- Economic development and Tourism
- Revisit University-Medical district

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority Focus

- Infrastructure (ie: broadband /wireless)
- Staffing economic development
- Communications / Leadership
- Mill rate / School district
- Transparency
- Town site
- Land use and private property interest
- Farming / Agriculture
- Re-orient Lobbyist
- Road bond

VOTE: The motion passed without objection.

## VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Moosey:

- thanked the Assembly for establishing the priorities; and
- remarked that he and his staff strive to develop the government services that are important to the Assembly.

Ms. McKechnie:

- spoke to the agenda management software solution she is pursuing for implementation at the Borough; and
- noted the intent is to get the software package up and running by the summer of 2015.

Mr. Spiropoulos:

- thanked the Assembly for the good meeting;
- spoke to the value of the established priorities in terms of prioritizing work provided by this office; and
- spoke to developments in the lawsuit filed by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough regarding the State's education funding formula.

Assemblymember Beck:

- thanked Ms. Kirk for facilitating the planning session;
- remarked that he found the session helpful; and
- thanked staff for their hard work in serving the residents of the Borough.

Assemblymember Mayfield:

- thanked Ms. Kirk for her assistance in facilitating the planning session;
- spoke to his experience in dealing with national and local catastrophes; and
- expressed his belief that local government should provide the very best emergency services available.

Assemblymember Sykes:

- thanked Ms. Kirk for her assistance in facilitating the planning session;
- thanked everyone for coming to the planning session;
- stated that he hoped more would have been accomplished today;
- expressed that he does not feel like the Assembly has a realistic picture of Borough finances;
- stated he wants a clear financial picture before budget deliberations begin;
- spoke in support of forward funding;
- added that big projects like the port and rail expansion need to generate more wealth than they cost;
- further added that big projects do not always generate the anticipated wealth; and
- spoke in favor of scheduling an annual planning session soon after the regular election.

Assemblymember Doty:

- expressed that she found today's planning session useful;
- spoke in favor of scheduling an annual planning session;
- added it is important for staff to be able to prepare for the planning session based on other deadlines;
- spoke in favor of learning more about a potential road bond package;
- spoke to the value of coordinated disaster planning and point of care delivery services; and
- spoke to the value of partnerships, coordinated communication, and interaction between emergency service providers.

Assemblymember Arvin:

- spoke to a recently released Gallup Poll in which Alaska jumped 15 spots to seize the title of happiest state in America;
- spoke to the benefits of Assembly planning sessions;
- remarked that discussion on how to fund priorities was lost today; and
- spoke to how emergency service and fire service are funded.

Mayor DeVilbiss:

- spoke to the recent legalization of marijuana in Alaska;
- thanked Ms. Kirk for facilitating the planning session;
- spoke to the Port Mackenzie Townsite; and
- spoke to the cost of operating government and the cost to taxpayers.

## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting adjourned at 2:38 p.m. .

  
LARRY DeVILBISS, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

  
LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 03/17/15