

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH AGRICULTURE ADVISORY BOARD

Chairman – LaMarr Anderson (01)	Mark Stahl (03)	Steven Sawyer (06)	Kenneth Hoffman (10)
Vice Chair – Stephen Brown (08)	Kim Bergey (04)	Adam Jensi (07)	Thomas Bergey (11)
VACANT (02)	Jozef Slowik (05)	Benjamin Swimm (09)	VACANT (12)

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING DSJ BUILDING LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM

May 17, 2023
4:30 P.M.

- I. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL
- II. Mr. Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:36 p.m.

Members present and establishing a quorum were: LaMarr Anderson, Stephen Brown, Mark Stahl, Kim Bergey, Jozef Slowik (4:40 p.m. by phone), Steven Sawyer, Kenneth Hoffman, Thomas Bergey (4:49 p.m. by phone, 5:19 p.m. in person)

Members absent and excused: Benjamin Swimm

Members absent: Adam Jensi

Staff present: Joseph Metzger, Asset Manager

Margie Cobb, Department Administrative Specialist

- III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Mr. Sawyer moved to approve agenda, Mr. Stahl 2nd. Agenda approved.

- IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Limit 3 minutes)
None

- V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
A. April 19, 2023
Hearing no changes or objection to Minutes as presented, Minutes approved.

- VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- A. Staff Report – Joseph Metzger
 - Plan is to share a staff report at each meeting in order to keep the Board up to date on business.:
 - First Ag conversion unanimously approved by Assembly. Assemblypersons Hale & Yundt commented specifically looking at changes for code changes (smaller subdivisions and allowing more than 4 subdivisions).

- Ag Sales this summer: Two parcels in Pt MacKenzie, which must sell with State Ag Covenants; one parcel north Willow as Title 23. Majority of the available land the Borough owns is not on the road system.
- Map requested by Board was prepared; he will send a PDF version to the Board. This map will be a “work in progress”; other layers discussed (State Ag, properties assessed as farm, etc.).
- May have to call a meeting in August if there are Ag Conversions pending, as well as Ag Sales prior to these going to the Assembly.

B. Work Session

The following topics were discussed. Board agreed to address top two. Other items will be considered at a later date.

- More than 4 parcels allowed to be subdivided, no less than 40 acres each parcel
- Smaller subdivisions - less than 40 acres
 - 20 acres
 - Soil surveys are an important requirement for smaller acreage
 - Acreage allowed for homesites
 - Based on distance to urban areas?
 - Proportional to acreage?
 - Consider diversity in farming
- Incentive for Ag Properties (taxes, development, etc.)
- Agricultural Sales Program
- MSB Ag Sales
 - Smaller lots (40 acres, 80 acres)

To make changes to the older Title 23 Covenants will take 70% vote of those under that program. Changes will be considered for all Ag Programs, not just Title 23.

Ms. Bergey requested that staff pull out the relevant language from current Covenants pertaining to changes being addressed so that, as language is being developed by the Board, this is in front of them.

VI. MEMBER COMMENTS (Limit to 3 minutes)

Mr. Slowik: Good progress made this meeting; sees benefits to smaller Ag parcel sales, glad Mr. Hoffman is on Board to share from the perspective of a very small farm; Board is on the right path.

Mr. Bergey: Agree with Mr. Slowik, need recommendations to the Assembly as they manipulate these ordinances.

Mr. Stahl: Thanked everyone for the good discussion, encouraging meeting. Wished everyone a good summer.

Ms. Bergey: Important to do this work for the small farmers; smaller parcels will more likely open doors of opportunities, and there is a market here for this.

Mr. Hoffman: Thanked Mr. Metzger for his efforts.


Mr. Sawyer: Would like to see 1 or 2 Assemblypersons to attend the meetings and listen in on the discussion; Mr. Metzger mentioned they can be invited by Board members;

Assemblymen Hale and Yundt have made comments in support of changes.

Mr. Brown: Shared about a phone call he recently received.

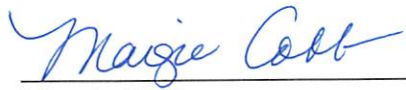
VII. NEXT MEETING
September 20, 2023

VIII. ADJOURNMENT
Mr. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.



LaMarr Anderson, Chairman 10/16/2023

ATTEST:



Margie Cobb
Department Administrative Specialist