

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)

AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING
LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM
Call In #: 1-907-290-7880
Participant Code: 656 397 507#

May 17, 2023
4:30 P.M.

- I. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- III. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Limit 3 minutes)
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - A. April 19, 2023
- V. ITEMS OF BUSINESS
 - A. Staff Report – Joe Metzger
 - B. Work Session
- VI. MEMBER COMMENTS (Limit to 3 minutes)
- VII. NEXT MEETING
 - September 20, 2023
- VIII. ADJOURNMENT

1 **MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH**
2 **AGRICULTURE ADVISORY BOARD**
3

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4
5
6 **DRAFT MINUTES**
7

8 **REGULAR MEETING**

April 19, 2023

9 **DSJ BUILDING**

4:30 P.M.

10 **LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM**
11

12 I. **CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL**

13 Mr. Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

14 Members present and establishing a quorum were: LaMarr Anderson, Stephen Brown (left
15 5:04 p.m.), Mark Stahl, Jozef Slowik, Steven Sawyer, Benjamin Swimm, Kenneth Hoffman
16 (arrived 4:37 p.m.)

17 Members absent and excused: Kim Bergey, Thomas Bergey

18 Members absent: Adam Jenski

19 Staff present: Joseph Metzger, Asset Manager

20 Margie Cobb, Department Administrative Specialist
21

22 II. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
23

24 Request made to move Item B under “Items of Business” to the first order of business due to
25 Mr. Brown needing to leave early. Mr. Stahl moved to approve agenda with change, Mr.
26 Sawyer 2nd. Agenda approved as amended.
27

28 III. **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Limit 3 minutes)**

29 Beverly Cutler: She does not see any reason why the McDonough’s request should not be
30 granted. She noted that there is a 2-page brochure published by the Borough that has more
31 detail and may dispel myths. She thanked the Board for their time and energy to get into the
32 details.
33

34 IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

35 A. February 15, 2023

36 Motion: Mr. Slowik moved, Mr. Stahl 2nd. Minutes approved.
37

38 V. **ITEMS OF BUSINESS**
39

40 A. Resolution 23-01 - A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
41 AGRICULTURE ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDING THE MATANUSKA-
42 SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY ADOPT ORDINANCE SERIAL NO. 23-035,
43 CONVEYING THE BOROUGH’S DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS INTEREST TO
44 JAMES AND AMBER MCDONOUGH FOR FEE SIMPLE TITLE WITH
45 AGRICULTURAL COVENANTS (MSB007985).

Mr. Metzger gave a staff report and stated there is a memorandum in the packet as well. Each application will require a similar Resolution to come to the Board, and then to the Assembly for approval. Ms. McDonough, applicant, spoke to their reason to request this conversion. Board asked whether the process for this one would be similar for others. Mr. Metzger replied this application was an easy one; each application will have different needs and requirements based on how complicated it may be. As future applications are reviewed, if there are comments made on public notices that are sent, those would be brought to the Board. The current application had no comments submitted by the public. Ms. Cutler, when requested, spoke in support. Mr. Brown motioned, Mr. Stahl seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

B. MSB Agricultural Land Sale Programs History (1964 – Present)

Mr. Metzger led this informational session to the Board. The Board agreed this presentation was extremely helpful. The brochure Ms. Cutler mentioned earlier was provided to the Board present by Mr. Metzger (copy attached)

Mr. Metzger notified the Board that there is an Agricultural Land Sale planned for Summer 2023. These purchases will be under Title 23.

Mr. Swimm inquired on whether any analysis had been done to see which was most successful? Mr. Metzger answered he was not aware of any; there are varying levels of success to each program insofar as farming is concerned. Mr. Swimm noted he'd be interested to know if the various programs corresponded to the way land was being used at the time as the Board moves forward with various other programs and sales.

The following suggestions for items to address were brought up during this meeting:

- Smaller parcels; ability to subdivide based on heirs
- Incentives, like a tax rebate, to Agriculture property owners to develop their businesses and provide that proof to the Borough to receive incentive
- Robust sale program

The Board will use the next meeting as a Work Session to discuss the future work the Board will take on. Input from the Board will be compiled and written, then prioritized. Mr. Metzger was requested to bring a map that shows designated Agriculture lands that are available, as well as designated agriculture lands that are currently sold; Title 13, Title 15 is easy to map, but Title 23 would be a research exercise.

VI. MEMBER COMMENTS (Limit to 3 minutes)

Mr. Slowik: Brought his hay production data for the last three years to share with the Board (attached).

Mr. Swimm: Suggested new Board members do a half-hour sit-down with staff to educate on programs.

Mr. Stahl: Echoed Mr. Swimm's suggestion.

Mr. Hoffman: Small farmer, Advocate for smaller parcels, 5 acres or less, for young farmers to allow for more people, more economic minds, more businesses.

Citizen Comments (per Mr. Anderson’s request):
Ms. McDonough: Thankful for approval by the Board.
Ms. Cutler: Again shared her appreciation for the Board’s efforts to combine past/future as they address issues and Mr. Metzger’s presentation.

VII. NEXT MEETING
May 17, 2023

VIII. ADJOURNMENT
Mr. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 5:52 p.m.

LaMarr Anderson, Chairman 3/15/2023

ATTEST:

Margie Cobb
Department Administrative Specialist

20-22 Farm Hay Data

	2020	2021	2023
Money spent			
Fertilizer cost	7369.78	9763.34	20005.65
Additional costs	2199.5	2199.5	1580
Labor (hours)	152	88	120
Labor (rate in \$)	20	22	25
Labor cost	3040	1936	3000
Fuel (gal)	500	500	500
Fuel (price)	2.72	3.48	5.2
Fuel cost	1360	1740	2600
Total spent	13969.28	15638.84	27185.65
Bales	492	351	403
% wet bales	99	100	10
Acres	73.9	65.5	131.7
Price per bale	28.39	44.56	67.46
Price per acre	189.03	238.76	206.42
Avg bale/acre	5.6	5.2	3.5

Note: Additional costs include wrap and blades, supplies were purchased in 2020 which extended through 2021, so split cost across both years. 2022 mesh wrap was used which was less expensive

Note: Labor is 1 person, 1 day fertilizing in spring (8 hours), then 2 people, (16 hours) each day harvest.

Note: 100 gal fertilizing, 400 gal harvest and wrap.

Note: State year gas avg price