

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on July 29, 2008, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by Mayor Curtis D. Menard for the purpose of introducing Ordinance Serial No. 08-119 and for discussions on the Tourism Infrastructure Study and the Regional Aviation Systems Plan.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Ms. Lynne Woods, Assembly District No. 1 (*Deputy Mayor*)
Mr. Pete Houston, Assembly District No. 2 (arrived at 6:07 p.m.)
Ms. Michelle Church, District No. 3
Ms. Mary Kvalheim, Assembly District No. 4
Ms. Cindy L. Bettine, Assembly District No. 5
Mr. Robert Wells, Assembly District No. 6 (arrived 6:10 p.m. via teleconference)
Mr. Tom Kluberton, Assembly District No. 7 (via teleconference)

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Lonnie R. McKechnie, Borough Clerk
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager
Mr. Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney
Ms. Amanda E. Charles, Executive Assistant to the Borough Clerk
Mr. Mark Mayo, Planning and Land Use Director
Ms. Patty Sullivan, Public Affairs Director
Mr. Dave Hanson, Economic Development Director

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Menard inquired if there were any changes to the agenda.

Assemblymember Woods requested that Audience Participation be taken up immediately after the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Bill Allen, Palmer City Manager.

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The following person spoke in support of Ordinance Serial No. 08-119 and the benefits of communication between the Borough and the cities: Mr. Bill Allen, Palmer City Manager.

The following person spoke in support of the development of the Hatcher Pass Ski Area with the condition that the Little Susitna River is not damaged: Ms. Helen Munoz.

V. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. INTRODUCTION (For public hearing – 08/05/08, 7 p.m., in the Borough Assembly Chambers)

1. Ordinance Serial No. 08-119: AN ORDINANCE PLACING BEFORE THE VOTERS AT THE REGULAR ELECTION ON OCTOBER 7, 2008, AN AREAWIDE ADVISORY QUESTION OF WHETHER THE BOROUGH SHOULD DEVELOP AN ALPINE AND NORDIC SKI AREA AT HATCHER PASS. *(Sponsored by: Assemblymember Kvalheim)*
 - a. IM No. 08-201

Ms. McKechnie read the above legislation into the record.

MOTION: Assemblymember Woods moved to introduce the legislation as read into the record by the Clerk and set the public hearing for August 5, 2008.

Assemblymember Woods:

- noted her objection to the ordinance as written; and
- stated that it does not contain enough information for the voters.

Assemblymember Church:

- spoke in favor of holding a public hearing; and
- noted that the Assembly could discuss and change the proposition language after the public hearing.

Assemblymember Kvalheim:

- stated that she supported the ordinance; and
- noted room for improvement in the details of the ordinance.

Assemblymember Houston queried the last possible date ordinances can be introduced in order to go on the ballot.

Ms. McKechnie responded that the any proposition that is to go on to the ballot has to be adopted by the Assembly no later than August 15, 2008.

Discussion ensued regarding introducing Ordinance Serial No. 08-119.

VOTE: The motion failed with Assemblymembers Houston, Church, and Kvalheim in support.

B. TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY

Mr. Hanson introduced the McDowell Group, Inc., made up of Ms. Susan Bell and Ms. Donna Logan.

Ms. Bell:

- provided the highlights of the Tourism Infrastructure Needs Study;
 - visitor volume;
 - estimated total direct spending;
 - estimated annual visitor spending;
 - tourism industry value;
 - infrastructure improvement categories;
 - evaluation criteria; and
 - road and trail system enhancements.

(The special meeting recessed at 7:58 p.m. and reconvened at 8:10 p.m.)

Ms. Bell:

- continued her presentation on the Tourism Infrastructure Needs Study;
 - visitor support services; and
 - additional study team recommendations.

Assemblymember Bettine requested a special meeting regarding a tourism summit be scheduled for October 18, 2008, at 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Hanson discussed a five-year implementation plan for the Tourism Infrastructure Needs Study.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- the possibility of raising the bed tax;
- the need to work with the cities; and
- placing a bed tax increase on the ballot.

C. REGIONAL AVIATION SYSTEMS PLAN

Mr. Mayo introduced Mr. Tom Mittendorf, Transportation Planning Manager for DOWL Engineering, and Mr. Steve Pavish, Subcontractor from Northern Horizons.

Mr. Mittendorf:

- spoke regarding comments received from the public on the Regional Aviation Systems Plan;
- provided a brief history and the needs behind the study;
- discussed the key issues of the plan;
 - aviation community involvement in government;
 - form an Aviation Advisory Board;
 - require airspace reviews and registration by the FAA;
 - promote aircraft “lights on” through pilot education programs;
 - ongoing work with military on airspace use;
 - support Capstone implementation;
 - communications;
 - reassign radio frequencies;
 - mapping of airports, frequencies, reporting points, military routes;
 - pilot education;

- airspace;
- airport compatibility;
 - notification to property owners of proximity to airport;
 - future comprehensive plans and special land use districts (SPUDs);
 - future lake management plans;
- new public airports; and
- airport improvements.

Assemblymember Bettine queried if there was an economic impact analysis done for the creation of a new airport.

Mr. Mittendorf:

- stated that in-depth research was not performed as it pertains to the creation of a new airport;
- continued his report on the aviation involvement recommendations; and
- discussed an implementation schedule.

Assemblymember Kluberton commented on possibly of amending the Talkeetna SPUD to include the information on airports and air parks.

Assemblymember Church queried how to move forward with the information provided.

Discussion ensued regarding how to implement the ideas within the study.

Mr. Robert Hamblen, Chair of the Transportation Advisory Board:

- spoke regarding the Transportation Advisory Board Resolution Serial No. 08-08; and
- spoke in support of the creation of an Aviation Advisory Board.

MOTION: Assemblymember Church moved to extend the special meeting past 10 p.m. but not to exceed 10:15 p.m.

VOTE: The motion passed without objection.

VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Ms. McKechnie:

- noted that she had distributed the list of candidates that have been certified so far for the October 7, 2008, regular election; and
- added that the candidate filing period closes on Friday, August 1, 2008.

Assemblymember Bettine stated that the Knik Sled Dog District is being zoned into her district.

Assemblymember Houston noted his preference for diversifying revenue and educating the public as it pertains to a sales tax for the 2009 ballot.

Assemblymember Church noted her disappointment with the lack of ordinances going forward to the ballot.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

/ S /

CURTIS D. MENARD, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

/ S /

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: 08/19/08