

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on October 26, 2004, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Timothy L. Anderson for the purpose of holding a joint Assembly/Planning Commission meeting.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Ms. Mary Kvalheim, Assembly District No. 4  
Ms. Jody Simpson, Assembly District No. 5  
Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District No. 6 (Deputy Mayor)  
Ms. Betty Vehrs, Assembly District No. 7

Assembly members absent and excused were:

Ms. Lynne Woods, Assembly District No. 1  
Mr. Bill Allen, Assembly District No. 2  
Mr. Talis J. Colberg, Assembly District No. 3

Planning Commission members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Chris Rose, District No. 1 (Vice-chair)  
Ms. Helga Larson, District No. 2 (Chair)  
Mr. Mark Masteller, District No. 3  
Ms. Faye I. Palin, District No. 4  
Mr. David Webster, District No. 5  
Mr. Gary Wolf, District No. 6

Planning Commission members absent and excused were:

Ms. Rose M. Jenne, District No. 7

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Michelle M. McGehee, CMC, Borough Clerk  
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager  
Ms. Janice A. Case, Deputy Borough Clerk  
Mr. Murph O'Brien, Planning and Land Use Director

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

Assemblymember Colver moved to add item F, Trunk/Glenn Area Planning and Public Facilities for discussion.

There was no objection noted.

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

#### **IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. Helen Munoz, a member of the Senior Citizens Advisory Board.

#### **V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

*(There was no one present who wished to speak.)*

#### **VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

##### **A. Incentives for Water Quality Protection Measures on Private Land *(Commissioner Masteller)***

Commissioner Masteller:

- voiced concerns about the future quality of water within the Borough;
- discussed possible solutions to ensure good water quality, such as vegetative buffers; and
- spoke to offering incentives to have natural vegetative buffers on private property, such as a reduction of property taxes.

Assemblymember Vehrs:

- stated that the Borough has begun the Big Lake watershed study; and
- discussed the importance of educating the public.

Discussion ensued regarding water quality protection measures for the Borough.

##### **B. Houston Septic Dumping *(Commissioner Larson)***

Commissioner Larson:

- stated that a septic dumping facility was built with a grant from the Alaska State Department of Environmental Conservation in Houston in 1984 and was closed in 1990;
- commented that currently the Borough transports its septic waste to the dumping station in Anchorage;
- voiced concerns about the possibility of the dumping site in Anchorage no longer allowing the Borough to utilize its site; and
- discussed the possibility of having a septic dumping site in the Borough.

Assemblymember Vehrs:

- stated that the septic station was given back to the city of Houston; and
- noted that they are currently using it in part for animal control and for storage.

Discussion ensued regarding a septic dumping facility in the Borough.

C. Presentation of Alaska 20-20 Program (*Commissioner Rose*)

Commissioner Rose explained the Alaska 20-20 Program.

Mr. Ken Osterkamp, Alaska 20-20 program:

- provided a presentation on the Alaska 20-20 program; and
- discussed the 2004 Alaska Progress Report.

Discussion ensued regarding the Alaska 20-20 program.

D. Land Use Acknowledgement Permits (*Assemblymember Kvalheim*)

Assemblymember Kvalheim asked Mr. O'Brien to provide a report on the land use and acknowledgement permits.

Mr. O'Brien:

- discussed the benefits of having land use acknowledgement permits; and
- stated that the permits would be a great way to track growth and activity within the Borough and provide insight to where future growth will be occurring within the Borough.

Assemblymember Simpson inquired if the Borough would have to update the Core Area Comprehensive Plan in order to implement the land use acknowledgement permits.

Mr. Duffy replied that the chapter one update of the Core Area Comprehensive Plan would provide a foundation for having a land use acknowledgement permit within the Borough.

Commissioner Masteller inquired how the system would work.

Mr. O'Brien:

- stated that property owners are currently encouraged to obtain an acknowledgement letter from the Borough to ensure that they meet the code requirements;
- commented that the land use acknowledgement permits would decrease the number of vacations and variances in the Borough; and
- noted that it would also provide information on where the growth is occurring in the Borough to help project where schools and emergency services will be needed.

Discussion ensued regarding land use acknowledgement permits.

E. Update of Comprehensive Planning Efforts (*Administration*)

Mr. O'Brien:

- provided an update of the current comprehensive planning efforts within the Borough;
- stated that the a two-day workshop will be held in January for the Meadow Lakes Comprehensive Plan to present the draft plan and receive public input;

- noted that the Y Community Council is looking to hold a community workshop on November 5 and 6, 2004, to review special land use district recommendations;
- commented that a request has been received from the Lazy Mountain Community Council to begin a comprehensive plan;
- stated that the Glacier View Community Council has requested to update their comprehensive plan;
- noted that they have received a \$325,000 appropriation for comprehensive planning efforts;
- stated that the Cornell Group is currently compiling information for the economic analysis of the Port Master Plan;
- noted that the economic analysis will be available in November and a draft master plan will be available in December;
- discussed the 1970 comprehensive plan update and noted that a draft will be ready for review in December;
- noted that several lake management plans are underway; and
- commented that the Planning Department is currently working on several ordinances such as the Title 16 rewrite, airport leaseholds, and a waste incinerator.

Assemblymember Colver voiced concern regarding the under staffing in the Planning Department for the current projects.

Mr. O'Brien:

- stated that there are many projects in various stages of completion within the Planning Department;
- stated that the staff members of the Planning Department are very busy at all times; and
- noted that he will be reviewing the staffing needs.

Discussion ensued regarding comprehensive planning issues.

F. Trunk/Glenn Area Planning and Public Facilities (*Assemblymember Colver*)

Assemblymember Colver:

- discussed the intense development occurring near the new hospital location;
- stated that the Borough has an unique opportunity to facilitate planning to eliminate some costly land acquisitions for this area in the future; and
- commented that the Borough needs to consider future transportation needs, emergency service needs, possible subdivisions, and schools sites for this area.

Commissioner Rose agreed that there is a huge amount of valuable land to the community in many ways.

Assemblymember Simpson:

- agreed that this area will receive a lot of growth due to the new hospital;
- inquired as to why this project is more important than the current projects on the priority list; and
- stated that all of the projects on the list are important and that it is difficult to address all the priorities.

Discussion continued regarding the growth near the new hospital location.

## **VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, PLANNING COMMISSION, AND STAFF COMMENTS**

Mr. O'Brien:

- voiced his appreciation for the Assembly's support; and
- stated that he hopes that the Planning Department will be able to move forward on new projects now that it is fully staffed..

Mr. Duffy thanked the member for discussing planning issues.

Ms. McGehee reminded the Assembly of the work session tomorrow.

Commissioner Webster:

- commented that he would like to see more of the public become better educated on the shoreline guides; and
- stated that the Borough should work with the cities on a septic dumping site.

Commissioner Masteller invited anyone with comments regarding watersheds to contact him.

Commissioner Palin voiced appreciation for the diversity of topics at the meeting tonight.

Commissioner Rose:

- thanked Mr. O'Brien for his hard work;
- stated that the Borough needs a balance between reactive and proactive projects;
- commented that it might be worth considering having part of the Planning Department focus on proactive efforts and the other part focus on reactive efforts; and
- noted that he has more Alaska 20-20 progress reports for those who want them.

Commissioner Larson:

- commented that valuable information was discussed tonight; and
- stated that the general population is becoming better educated and that education is the key.

Assemblymember Simpson commented that Lynn Fuller, the Water Quality Coordinator, is trying to develop a traveling water display for educational purposes.

Assemblymember Vehrs:

- stated that she hears comments all of the time about reactive planning;
- stated that the Borough needs to try to find a way to involve the public in the process more; and
- noted that when the public understands the process and gets involved they become part of the solution.

Assemblymember Kvalheim:

- inquired if water education would be able to be placed on the Borough's website;
- recommended having a website for children on the Borough page; and

- thanked the Planning Commission for hard work on the ordinances that they have recently adopted, such as the Coal Bed Methane Conditional Use Permit.

Mayor Anderson:

- asked Mr. Duffy to write the cities a letter regarding septic disposals;
- stated that the Borough has been in a reactive state for many years;
- opined that the Borough has been creating a proactive state simultaneously;
- commented that many communities throughout the Borough are realizing the value of planning;
- stated that he appreciated the communities coming forward to create a comprehensive plan; and
- thanked the Planning Commissioners for attending the meeting tonight.

### VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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TIMOTHY L. ANDERSON, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

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MICHELLE M. MCGEHEE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: November 16, 2004