



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Deputy Borough Manager

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CITIZEN WORKING GROUP MEETINGS ON CRIME IN THE BOROUGH **CONSOLIDATED REPORT TO MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Per Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly direction, the Borough Manager's Office facilitated a series of three public "working group" meetings regarding crime in the Borough. The purpose was to facilitate meetings that would enable citizens to discuss crime in the Borough. They answered six questions about what their top priorities were or whether they were in favor of certain initiatives or not as indicated below.

Meetings were held as follows:

June 18, 2018 at Willow, with 25 people participating in four individual groups.

June 20, 2018 at Palmer, with 15 people participating in two individual groups.

June 25, 2018 at Wasilla with 39 citizens participating in five individual groups.

As indicated by the scores and responses below, there were similar, if not the same concerns in virtually all groups and locations. Additionally, it is noteworthy to say that although there are some high overall percentages in some groups for "yes" answers, there were also "no" votes on an individual basis that may not be reflected in the overall percentage.

It is safe to say that crime is a major concern of citizens in the Borough and they would like to see actions taken to reduce crime.

George W. Hays
Deputy Borough Manager

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Scoring Notes: The citizens at each meeting were divided into nearly equal groups to hold individual group discussions on each of the six questions below. Each group wrote down what their answers were for the questions, then voted individually on what their preferences or top 3 answers were. Once finished with the individual group voting, the facilitator then consolidated all answers for all the groups and every citizen then individually voted on their top answers at the overall group level. Those consolidated answers at each location are what was scored in the charts below.

For answers where a priority order was needed (questions 1, 2, and 6) the following scoring was used for each location: the #1 priority at each location was given 10 points, #2 was given 8 points, #3 was given 6 points, #4 was given 4 points, #5 was given 2 points and any priority that was #6 or below was zero points. The main reason for ending the scoring at that point was that the questions asked for the top 3 answers in priority order. If the answer did not appear at all on the sheet as noted in question 2, then the box is blank without a score at all.

1. What do you think are the 3 biggest crime issues in the Borough, in priority order?					
Rank	Issue	Willow	Palmer	Wasilla	Score
#1	Drugs	10	10	10	30
#2	Theft	8	8	8	24
#3	SB 91/Recidivism	2	0	6	8
#3	Vandalism	6	2	0	8
#5	Rehabilitation	0	6	0	6

2. What are your recommendations to reduce crime?					
Rank	Recommendation	Willow	Palmer	Wasilla	Score
#1	Prevention: Repeal/Revise SB91; Longer Jail Term; and Tougher Consequences	8	10	10	28
#2	More Troopers on duty. Training and Address Turnover Issue(s) (Trooper Retirement Program)	10	8	8	26
#3	More Mental Health/Drug Rehab Services In and Out of Prison	8	8	0	16
#4	Neighborhood Watch Program	4	4	4	12
#5	Establish Borough Sheriff Department			8	8
#6	More Authority For Law Enforcement Officers			4	4
#7	Community Public Safety Officers		2		2

3. How important is it that the Borough takes actions to implement changes vs. the State taking action?					
Rank	Recommendation	Willow	Palmer	Wasilla	Score
#1	State	100%		60%	60%
#2	Borough	0%		40%	40%

NOTE: Palmer groups did not score this question. Instead they provided recommendations for each entity as follows:
Borough Tasks - Improve Code Enforcement; Facilitate Youth Programs; Public Outreach Education; and Memorandum of Understanding with State of Alaska.
State of Alaska Tasks - Address Issues with AST Pay and Benefits; Restructure Programs; Criminal Justice Reform; Childhood Education; and Fund Re-Entry Program.

4. Is there an appetite for additional government (i.e. in the form of some type of police enforcement)?					
Rank		Willow	Palmer	Wasilla	Score
#1	Yes	75%	40%	100%	72%
#2	No	25%	60%		28%

NOTE:
Willow: One "Yes" vote for increasing government, but only at the State level.
Wasilla: Voted "Yes" for increasing government at both the Borough and State levels.

5. Are you willing to pay increased taxes for police enforcement? Total votes on this one; Yes (higher or lower costs) or No?					
Rank	Recommendation	Willow	Palmer	Wasilla	Score
#1	Yes	75%	60%	50%	62%
#2	No	25%	40%	50%	38%
#1	Yes - Higher (over \$10 million)	67%		50%	58%
#2	Yes - Lower (\$10 million or less)	33%			42%

NOTE:
Willow: Two of the three groups responding "Yes" did not want to increase property taxes but were willing to pay a sales tax and tax tourists. One of the groups responding "Yes" did so with the caveat that taxes are used to better services.
Palmer: The groups in Palmer responding "Yes" did not answer "Higher" or "Lower."
Wasilla: One of the five groups did not respond to this question. One of the two groups responding "Yes" said they would support higher costs with the caveat of a sales tax with a cap and a sales tax in addition to Proposition 1.

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6. What are your expectations of measurable outcomes as a result of implementing your recommendations?					
Rank	Recommendation	Willow	Palmer	Wasilla	Score
#1	Reduction of Crime	10	8	8	26
#2	More Police Presence and Stations	8		10	18
#3	Reduction of Repeat Offenders/Lower Recidivism Rates		10	4	14
#4	Increase in the Availability of Mental Health Services	8			8
#5	Safer Community/Sense of Better Security			6	6
#5	Reduce the Number of First Time Offenders		6		6
#7	New Laws When SB 91 Is Repealed			4	4
#7	Increase the Number of Neighborhood Watch Organizations/Community Involvement		4		4
	Decreased Police Response Times			0	0
	Criminals Leave The Borough			0	0
	More Incarcerations/Prosecutions; Increased Incarceration Costs			0	0
	Recommendations should be Implemented in a Timely manner "Get 'er Done"			0	0
	More Tourism				0
	Decrease in Family/Domestic Violence Crimes; Child Neglect				0
	Increased Property Value				0
	Decreased Junk and Trash Cases				0
<p>NOTE: Recommendations listed that have a score of "0" were provided by the groups in Willow but were not ranked by those groups.</p>					