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**Denali Borough Assembly  
Minutes of the Special Meeting  
Virtual Meeting  
April 29, 2020**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Presiding Officer Jared ZIMMERMAN called the public hearing to order at 6:00 PM.

**ORDINANCE 20-06: Bison Gulch Project Allocation**

There were no comments.

**REGULAR MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Presiding Officer Jared ZIMMERMAN called the regular meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

Assembly members present: Jake HILL, Jill BOELSMA, Lisa MINER, Jared ZIMMERMAN, Tallon SHREEVE, Joe CHATFIELD, Eileen HOLMES and Krista ZAPPONE. Assembly members absent: Jeff STENGER. Mayor Clay Walker was also present.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Jake HILL MOVED to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded.

Jake HILL MOVED to amend the agenda by moving agenda item G. Communications and Appearance Request, to agenda item E. to allow the Tri-Valley 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class to offer their presentation prior to the regular reports. The motion was seconded. The VOTE by show of hands and voice confirmation was unanimous.

The VOTE by show of hands and voice confirmation to approve the agenda as amended was unanimous.

**COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUEST**

**Tri-Valley School 8<sup>th</sup> grade presentation on “access to safe water”**

The Tri-Valley School 8<sup>th</sup> grade students offered a presentation of their class project in which they tested, analyzed and reported on water quality from numerous testing locations in the Denali Borough.

**REPORTS**

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

1 Jake HILL MOVED to receive the February 2020 financial report. The motion was  
2 seconded. The VOTE by show of hands and voice confirmation to receive the February  
3 2020 financial report was unanimous.

4  
5 **SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT**

6 Superintendent Dan Polta verbally highlighted information provided in the attached written  
7 report (Appendix A).

8  
9 **MAYOR REPORT**

10 Mayor Clay Walker verbally highlighted information provided in the attached written report  
11 (Appendix B).

12  
13 **EMERGENCY PLANNER REPORT**

14 Emergency Planner Chris Noel verbally highlighted information provided in the attached  
15 written report (Appendix C).

16  
17 **ASSEMBLY COMMENTS**

18 Assembly members expressed appreciation for and commented on the following:

- 19 • Expressed appreciation for all essential workers and their continued efforts,
- 20 • expressed appreciation for virtual meetings and reports,
- 21 • expressed appreciation and kudos to the Tri-Valley 8<sup>th</sup> grade class and their  
22 presentation,
- 23 • expressed appreciation for the Denali Borough financial structure and the ability to  
24 plan for the financial impact of a crisis,
- 25 • congratulated Ms. Gretchen Striker for being named a BP Teacher of Excellence,  
26 and
- 27 • encouraged the community to wear face masks in public and wash hands regularly.

28  
29 **DRAFT ORDINANCES**

30 **ORDINANCE 20-08: Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Amendment**

31 Jill BOELSMA MOVED to introduce Ordinance 20-08. The motion was seconded. The roll  
32 call VOTE to introduce Ordinance 20-08 was unanimous.

33  
34 Krista ZAPPONE MOVED to postpone Ordinance 20-08. The motion was seconded. The  
35 VOTE by show of hands and voice confirmation was unanimous.

36  
37 **ORDINANCE 20-09: Fiscal Year 2021 Budget**

38 Jill BOELSMA MOVED to introduce Ordinance 20-09. The motion was seconded. The roll  
39 call VOTE to introduce Ordinance 20-09 was unanimous.

40  
41 Jake HILL MOVED to postpone Ordinance 20-09. The motion was seconded. The VOTE by  
42 show of hands and voice confirmation was unanimous.

1 **ORDINANCE 20-10: Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for Fiscal Year 2021 through**  
2 **2027**

3 Krista ZAPPONE MOVED to introduce Ordinance 20-10. The motion was seconded. The  
4 roll call VOTE to introduce Ordinance 20-10 was unanimous.

5  
6 Jill BOELSMA MOVED to postpone Ordinance 20-10. The motion was seconded. The  
7 VOTE by show of hands and voice confirmation was unanimous.

8  
9 **PENDING ORDINANCES**

10 **ORDINANCE 20-06: Bison Gulch Project Allocation**

11 Krista ZAPPONE MOVED to approve Ordinance 20-06. The motion was seconded. The roll  
12 call VOTE was unanimous.

13  
14 **RESOLUTIONS**

15 **RESOLUTION 20-05: Approving unincorporated communities for Community**  
16 **Assistance**

17 Krista ZAPPONE MOVED to approve Resolution 20-05. The motion was seconded. The roll  
18 call VOTE was unanimous.

19  
20 **OTHER BUSINESS**

21 **LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL**

22 Jill BOELSMA MOVED to not-protest the following liquor license renewal applications. The  
23 motion was seconded. The VOTE by show of hands and voice confirmation was unanimous.

- 24 a) AMCO #3036: Three Bears, Bears Den Liquor Renewal Application  
25 b) AMCO #5129: Prey and Bar Eatery Renewal Application  
26 c) AMCO #5130: Denali Backcountry Lodge Renewal Application  
27 d) AMCO #5619: Denali Bluffs – Perky Moose Renewal Application  
28 e) AMCO #5183: Black Bear Coffee House Renewal Application

29  
30 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

31 There were no public comments.

32  
33 **ASSEMBLY COMMENTS**

34 Assembly members commented on the following:

- 35 • thanked those that participated in the meeting,  
36 • expressed appreciation for essential workers, specifically mentioning local Golden  
37 Valley Electric Association power plant employees,  
38 • thanked Mr. Newton and her 8<sup>th</sup> grade students for the class presentation during  
39 the meeting,  
40 • encouraged the community to stay diligent with State of Alaska health mandates,  
41 and  
42 • expressed appreciation for the finance committee and the Denali Recovery  
43 Alliance.

1 **TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

2 Upcoming assembly meetings will be virtual meeting on the following dates and times:

- 3 • Public Hearing and Regular Meeting on Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at 6:00 PM.  
4 • Grant Review Meeting on Wednesday, May 27, 2020 at 6:00 PM.  
5

6 **ADJOURN:**

7 Jill BOELSMA MOVED to adjourn. The motion was seconded. The meeting was adjourned  
8 by unanimous voice vote at 8:28 PM.  
9

10

11 APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
12 Jared Zimmerman, Presiding Officer  
13

14

15

16

17 ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
18 Amber Renshaw, Borough Clerk  
19

20

21

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_



**Superintendent's Report  
Denali Borough Assembly  
Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Dear Denali Borough Assembly and Mayor Walker,

Please accept this written report for the month of April.

1. Appreciation/Congratulations

- a. I won't list names for this out of risk of omitting someone accidentally. While we still have some basic challenges to access right now for our students to get fully connected online, we think we are very close to 100% connected. I'm not saying everyone is making full use of that connectivity each and every day or that we don't have some bandwidth choke points for some, but I know that a lot of staff worked to help our students get their devices, get or increase internet access and bandwidth, and troubleshoot technical problems. I read an article this weekend that Anchorage is still struggling to get devices and access to all of their students. If anyone hears of someone still struggling with this first step, please let us know so we can do what we can to improve their situation.
- b. Thank you Angel Hayes, for the fabulous interview you gave to Kris Capps for her article in the Fairbanks Daily News Miner about your help delivering educational materials to our students.
- c. Thank you Gretchen Striker, for your interview with KTVA on your selection as a BP Teacher of Excellence.
- d. Thank you TVS Principal, Nathan Pitt, for your video to students explaining and demonstrating good participation protocols for zoom class sessions.

2. Coronavirus -

- a. Thursday April 9<sup>th</sup>, in the afternoon, Governor Dunleavy issued a new health mandate and extended the school building closure date through the end of the school year. While many think of our school year as being related to when our students attend school, state statute establishes that a school year is from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>. The timing of student attendance, within that date span is then a decision of the local school board. The health mandate also included language about the possibility of considering allowing small groups of students into buildings later in May, based on health facts at the time, and locally approved plans. At this point,

I don't think we could plan for this type of gathering but it is good to know that the Governor will look at the possibility.

- b. Graduation and End of Year Events - DEED, in working with the Governor and Unified Command, issued guidance for school districts for end of year events like graduation. The expectations continue to be very restrictive in terms of group size and physical contact and physical space between participants. We're doing a closer review and are working with each school site to develop formal plans to honor and celebrate our graduates. I continue to say, graduation will not be like it was before.
- c. Semester Report Cards - This week we issued our formal guidelines for semester report cards in DBSD and published these to our community. The basics of the plan ensure that students in grades Kg-8 will advance their grade level next year, that high school credit and GPA can still be earned, and that student course grades will not decrease during this period of time provided students are engaging with distance learning.

### 3. Finances

- a. FY20 Budget - FY20 Budget - We continue to monitor and update the changes in our known and planned expenses under distance learning. Similarly, we continue to defer small and mid-sized internal projects. This should allow us to build our unrestricted carryover above the 10% normal threshold. This will position the district to manage uncertainties in the Fall.
- b. CARES Act - Cares Act - DEED published the amounts that each district will receive under this bill. The federal portion of direct aid to districts is provided using the formula, and statewide ratio, for Title I funding. Under this calculation, DBSD would receive ~25,000. Governor Dunleavy used part of the discretionary money under the Cares Act to "true up" districts such as ours. Every district in Alaska will receive at least as much direct aid as they would have, had he not vetoed the \$30 million in funds outside the BSA for next year. Therefore, DBSD will receive ~\$150,000. There are still some questions on the legal restrictions on the use of the funds (and some question as to the overall legality of the way the Governor is using his discretionary funds, but it seems like those will become clear or sort out in due course.
- c. First Student - I communicated with First Student regarding the rate of compensation we are providing our transportation provider. They continue to help with the delivery of supplies and stand ready to help further when and if we ask. First Student is adjusting the daily rate of service to a lower rate due to lower operating costs such as fuel expenses. These payments to First Student ensure that they are able to provide ongoing wage payments to our local drivers and maintain this work force for our community. Even in normal years we regularly struggle to have a full complement of local drivers.

- d. FY21 Budget - The Denali Borough Assembly is considering its local contribution to the FY21 DBSD Budget. The District's total request includes both a required portion and an optional additional portion. The required portion is based on the value of real and personal property in the Borough. The additional amount the Borough is allowed to give is capped by state statute at 23% of the District's Basic Need. The total request from DBSD is \$2,679,071. This includes both portions and is slightly below the maximum allowable based on our enrollment projections. It is slightly lower than the amount requested and provided in FY20.

#### 4. Facilities

- a. Anderson Roof - We published this RFP. Several contractors and subcontractors participated in a conference call to receive additional information. One roofing company came onsite for an in-person inspection. This company worked for the District before and has a positive work history with us.
- b. Generator Update Project - This project is RFP ready.
- c. Automated Door Locks - We continue to develop a final quote for this project.
- d. Department of Forestry - We signed tentative agreements with the Department of Forestry to guide the potential use and related fees of our school buildings if there is a local wildfire and our facilities are needed to support the suppression efforts.

#### 5. Personnel

- a. Certified Staff
  - i. No updates
- b. Classified Staff
  - i. No updates
- c. Exempt Staff
  - i. No updates

Sincerely,

Dan Polta  
Denali Borough School District

# DENALI BOROUGH

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*Clay Walker, Mayor*

## **April 2020 Mayor's Report to the Denali Borough Assembly – Regular Meeting Edition**

This report speaks primarily to non-agenda items. Agenda items will be discussed in meeting.

### **CARES Act State Funding**

- Of the \$1.25 billion directed to the State of Alaska from the CARES Act, Governor Dunleavy is proposing to direct 45%, or \$562.5 million, to municipalities in direct aid. The borough is grateful that Governor Dunleavy early on identified “emergency community lost tax revenue replacement” as a funding priority. Considerable hurdles exist in the form of challenging Act language relating to allowed uses, U.S. treasury guidance, and legislative process. While we plan and budget for the known conditions, we are hopeful that federal aid could support the deep losses we will suffer directly from the COVID-19 crisis and associated federal and state mandates.

### **Borough Fiscal Position**

- I performed a deeper analysis of our financial position, analyzing ratios such as liquidity and fund balances. The borough was built upon a stable fiscal foundation which has been protected and strengthened over the years. The fact that we have no bonded indebtedness is very rare and leads to excellent liquidity ratios. Given our vulnerable position, sensitive to downturns in visitation, we have maintained strong fund balances. Here again, our ratios are very favorable compare to other municipalities. Our unrestricted fund balance to general fund expenditures ratio is 56%. Credit rating agencies like to see 17%, which many municipalities fall below. Finally, our forward funding requirement affords us stability in a time of crisis and allows us the time and opportunity to plan ahead. These three legs provide a stable fiscal foundation, which we may need to lean upon, but our charge as leaders will be to leave the foundation intact and supportive. Yes, this crisis acutely impacts the Denali Borough, but we are well-built to blunt the impacts.

### **Denali Recovery Alliance**

- In partnership with the Denali Chamber of Commerce, the borough has been active with the new Denali Recovery Alliance, focused on weathering this crisis and coming out strong on the other side. The group is meeting weekly and sharing information and ideas. I continue to research different economic development models and programs and share my findings.

### **Denali Area Healthcare Providers meetings**

- The borough continues to host this weekly meeting of area providers, which has been helpful for all. A focus has been, and will continue to be, response to COVID-19 and efforts to increase testing capabilities locally.

APPENDIX B

## **Summer Visitor Season Updates**

- While changes occur almost daily, the Alaska Railroad has delayed passenger service until July 1 and Holland America Princess announced the cancellation of all cross-gulf cruise ship travel, which prompted the closure of their lodges this summer. This is a devastating development for many local small businesses. The Grande Denali Lodge is closing for the summer, while the Denali Bluffs plans to open around July 1. Some lodges, such as the McKinley Village Lodge have yet to announce dates or status. Denali National Park is considering different road management approaches for this abnormal season. The borough is engaged and advocating for in-state travel access, should the health mandates allow.

## **Anderson City Council Meeting**

- I attended their April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting when they passed a local disaster emergency declaration and subsequently stood up their Incident Management Team. The council also expressed concern for the upcoming fire season and discussed a burn ban within the city limits.

## **Denali Borough School District Board meeting**

- I attended, via Zoom, the April 16 meeting of the School Board. I congratulated the district for managing the transition to virtual school in a thoughtful and well-received manner. I informed the board that the FY21 budget, as currently drafted, prioritizes funding for education and emergency response.

## **Community Transportation Program Application Success**

- Together with the Alaska DOT, the Denali Borough applied for state funding for Healy Spur Road improvements, including paved shoulders on both sides of the road. In submitting this application, the borough also committed to a 9.03 percent share in the total project cost, which is estimated to total \$144,029. Thankfully, the Community Transportation Program Evaluation Board selected this project for award. The project will now be programmed into the STIP, with planning and design steps in coming fiscal years.

## **Cantwell to Ferry Transportation Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study**

- The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) for this important planning project met for the first time this month, virtually. I was pleased to participate and see a wide breadth of representation and focus on planning the future of this key section of the Parks Highway. A goal is to have a number of improvement projects identified, with broad support, and progress through the planning and environmental phases of NEPA compliance. This multi-year study will include different opportunities for public input, beginning this summer.

## **COVID-19 Expenditures**

- Our largest expenditure is expected to be the lost revenue which is a direct result of the federal and state directives and mandates in response to the crisis. We are and will continue to track those expenses carefully. No other expenditures were made at this point.

## **REAL ID Requirement moved from Oct 1, 2020 to Oct. 1, 2021**

## **Alaska Energy Authority Grant Application for Electric Vehicle Charging Ports**

- On behalf of the borough, I wrote a letter of support for an AES grant application to support new electric vehicle charging ports in the borough. The letter (and grant application) did not commit the borough or any local business to incur any costs relating to this proposed project, but supported the concept and affirmed the importance of port in the borough, given our central geographic location.

APPENDIX B

## **Clear Air Force Station Long Range Discrimination Radar (LRDR) Environmental Assessment**

- The Missile Defense Agency (MDA), working with the Federal Aviation Administration, released an improved design of air space architecture which will allow for regular use of nearby Clear Airport. The proposed Special Air Space restrictions are detailed in attachments. The MDA wants to ensure that all interested parties have ample opportunity to provide input. Both an Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Statement are in progress.

## **Dry Creek Flooding Issues**

- In response to expressed concerns, I sent an update letter to residents (attached) who shared their contact information. This is an ongoing issue, which does have considerable community impacts.

Happy late April, happy meltdown. As always, feel free to call me or staff if you have any questions.

-Clay

## MEMO

**To:** Denali Borough Assembly Members

**From:** Chris Noel, Emergency Planner

**Date:** April 29, 2020

**Re:** COVID-19 and other updates

COVID-19 testing is now available at the Cantwell Clinic (907-768-2122), operated by the Copper River Native Association. The clinic has graciously made COVID-19 referrals and testing free to the general public. Interior Community Health Clinic in Healy will be staffed with a provider full-time starting Monday May 4<sup>th</sup>, and testing will soon follow. As the Mayor mentioned, regular healthcare provider coordination calls continue. Immediate personal protective equipment needs for the local clinics and EMS providers have been met, and we will continue to look forward and anticipate future needs. We are continuing regular Incident Management team meetings. Health Mandate 16: Reopen Alaska Responsibly Plan, Phase 1-A, was released by the State of Alaska Friday April 24<sup>th</sup>, and provides a framework for businesses to offer services while protecting public health. The mandate includes specific Attachments for Restaurants, Childcare and Day Camps, Lodging and Overnight Camping, Social, religious and other gatherings, and Intrastate Travel and Outdoor Day activity to name a few. Common themes of many of these include the mandates and guidelines we have become accustomed too- emphasis on strong personal hygiene and social distancing, frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces, and wearing a cloth mask when entering public spaces. Public Health nursing extended an offer to any local business to discuss the mandates and strategies for re-opening.

Enforcement remains an ongoing challenge for the State. Alaskans have successfully flattened the curve, by following the mandates and through the incredible work of healthcare providers. To report violations of the mandates, send an email to [investigations@alaska.gov](mailto:investigations@alaska.gov). We all must remain diligent and take personal responsibility for protecting our own health, and minimizing the risk we pose to others.

We are accepting public comments on the Hazard Mitigation Plan update including the City of Anderson, until tomorrow. At that time, the draft update will be sent to the state for review and comment. As a recap, this plan only covers natural hazards and does not include pandemics, acts of terrorism, and other human caused events.

The State of Alaska and other land managers will face real challenges in managing wildfires this summer, due to the complexities of moving resources while preventing the spread of the coronavirus. For that reason, open burning has been suspended across the state starting May 1<sup>st</sup>, until further notice. This includes burn barrels and debris burning, but does not include small warming and cooking fires, and other cooking devices with controlled open flames. Over 60% of wildfires over the last 20 years are human caused. This suspension will be reassessed throughout the season and may be modified as conditions allow.

The Firewise Brush drop off program is once again available at the three Borough solid waste facilities. Residents and businesses can visit [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org) for information on reducing the fire risk around their property, or contact their local fire department.

### APPENDIX C