

1 **Denali Borough Assembly**  
2 **Minutes of the Regular Meeting**  
3 **December 8, 2021**

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5 **PUBLIC HEARING**

6 There were pending Ordinances to consider.  
7

8 **REGULAR MEETING**

9 **CALL TO ORDER**

10 Presiding Officer Jared ZIMMERMAN called the regular meeting to order at 6:02 PM.  
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12 **ROLL CALL**

13 Assembly members present: Joe CHATFIELD, Jeff STENGER, Jared ZIMMERMAN, Eileen  
14 HOLMES, Lisa MINER, Krista ZAPPONE, David ALEXANDER and Tallon SHREEVE.  
15 Mayor Clay Walker was also present.  
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17 Assembly members absent: Dominic CANALE  
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19 Tallon SHREEVE MOVED to excuse Assembly Member CANALE. The motion was  
20 seconded.  
21

22 The VOTE TO EXCUSE PASSED by unanimous consent.  
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24 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

25 There were no public comments.  
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27 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

28 Tallon SHREEVE MOVED to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded.  
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30 The VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA PASSED by unanimous consent.  
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32 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

33 **NOVEMBER 10, 2021 ASSEMBLY REGULAR MEETING**

34 Tallon SHREEVE MOVED to approve the minutes from the November 10, 2021 Assembly  
35 Meeting. The motion was seconded.  
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1 The VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES PASSED by unanimous consent.

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3 **REPORTS**

4 **PARTNER REPORTS**

5 Seamus Siddall with Horizon Medical reported the following:

- 6 • COVID-19 vaccination and testing services will continue to be provided by Horizon
- 7 Medical through the winter at the Tri-Valley Community Center.
- 8 • The number of positive COVID cases are on the decline.
- 9 • A new variant has been identified but so far, the Omicron variant appears to be
- 10 milder than other variants.

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12 Vanessa Juszczak with the Denali Chamber of Commerce and Discover Denali reported the

13 following:

- 14 • Visitation numbers appear to be strong for the 2022 summer season.
- 15 • The Denali Chamber is looking to partner with the Denali Borough School District to
- 16 establish intern and entrepreneurial experiences to expose local students to the
- 17 leisure and hospitality business sector.
- 18 • The Denali Chamber of Commerce offers non-profit board member training for any
- 19 and all members that would like to receive this training.
- 20 • Discover Denali continues to work towards their first magazine publication.
- 21 • Discover Denali is working to assume responsibility for the two highway wayside
- 22 locations in the canyon area.

23

24 **FINANCE REPORT**

25 Krista ZAPPONE MOVED to receive the August 2021 and September 2021 Finance

26 Reports. The motion was seconded.

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28 The VOTE TO RECEIVE THE AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2021 FINANCE REPORTS

29 PASSED by unanimous consent.

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31 **SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT**

32 Superintendent Dan Polta verbally highlighted information provided in the attached written

33 report (see Attachment A).

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35 **MAYOR REPORT**

36 Mayor Clay Walker verbally highlighted information provided in the attached written report

37 (see Attachment B).

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**ASSEMBLY COMMENTS**

Assembly members expressed the following comments:

- Thanked all those that provided reports.
- Expressed pride in the Tri-Valley School Volleyball team that competed in the State High School Volleyball tournament and were honored as the team with the highest GPA.
- Informed the public of the Healy Valley Lions Club COVID relief program.
- Thanked all of those in our community that are willing to serve and volunteer.

**COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUEST**

The Assembly received written communication from Laurie Gieck with Alliance regarding the annual financial statement.

**DRAFT ORDINANCES**

There were no draft ordinances to consider.

**PENDING ORDINANCES**

There were no pending ordinances to consider.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION 21-17: Application for ARPA Local Government Lost Revenue Relief Program**

Krista ZAPPONE MOVED to approve Resolution 21-17. The motion was seconded.

The roll call VOTE TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 21-17 passed unanimously.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**MARIJUANA LICENSE RENEWAL #11382: DENALI CANNABIS CACHE APPLICATION**

Krista ZAPPONE MOVED to not-protest the license renewal for Marijuana License #11382; Denali Cannabis Cache. The motion was seconded.

The VOTE TO NOT-PROTEST PASSED by unanimous consent.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

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**ASSEMBLY COMMENTS**

Assembly members offered the following comments:

- Expressed appreciation for a productive and cordial meeting.
- Encouraged anyone impacted financially by COVID-19 to apply for the Healy Valley Lions Club COVID Cost Reimbursement Program.
- Neighbor to Neighbor will be assembling and delivering food boxes to families in need on December 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Wished everyone a Happy Holiday season.

**TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next regular Assembly meeting will be Wednesday, January 12, 2022 at 6:00 PM

**ADJOURN**

Tallon SHREEVE MOVED to adjourn. The motion was seconded.  
The MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 7:04 PM by unanimous consent.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jared Zimmerman, Presiding Officer

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amber Renshaw, Borough Clerk                      Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_



**Superintendent's Report  
Denali Borough Assembly  
Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Dear Denali Borough Assembly and Mayor Walker,

1. Appreciation/Congratulations

- a. Thank you to the health care workers and volunteers who staffed the vaccination clinic on Friday the 12<sup>th</sup> of November.
- b. Congratulations to the Tri-Valley Girls Volleyball Team - They qualified for the state tournament and were in Anchorage this past weekend representing their school and community.
- c. Congratulations to our students who participated recently in All State Music. They are Kami VanDeventer, Teagan Such, Paige Scoles, and Bella Batori. Great effort and hard work by our student-athletes and student-singers.

2. 2021-22 Smart Start -

- a. School Based Vaccine Offering - Nurse Keith and public health coordinated covid and flu vaccines at the schools on Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November. They provided 11 flu vaccines, 5 covid boosters, and 1 pediatric vaccine. Vaccination rates for Denali remain fairly steady with 75% of all residents receiving at least one vaccine dose, ~50% of children ages 12-18, and ~25% of children ages 5-11.
- b. New Variant - A new coronavirus variant called "Omicron" has been identified and is appearing in more countries and states. It has not yet been confirmed in Alaska. Omicron has a large number of mutations, as compared to other strains of the virus. Scientists are studying this variant, our immune response, and disease presentation. They are looking to determine if Omicron is more transmissible, more fatal than other strains such as Delta. They are also looking to see the effectiveness of current vaccines to combat Omicron.
- c. DBSD Smart Start Framework - At the November meeting the School Board reviewed the District's operating Framework. They adopted a change called "Test to Stay." Under this procedure, if a student is identified as a close contact, then rather than quarantining at home away from in-person learning, that family can have a test performed each day before school. If the test is negative, the student remains at school. If the test is positive the student returns home and begins their isolation period as a

**Mission Statement**

*Working together to nurture, empower and inspire today's student to positively shape tomorrow's world.*

confirmed positive. The Board will consider the Framework again during its meeting on January 20<sup>th</sup>.

### 3. Strategic Planning

- a. At the November meeting the School Board adopted the Strategic Plan as developed by the Core Planning Team. The new mission statement of the District is “Working together to nurture, empower and inspire today’s student to positively shape tomorrow’s world.”
- b. Last week I sent invitations to the Core Planning Team and to all staff inviting them to serve on the action teams. These teams will work on each identified strategy and develop a series of more detailed actions for the district to implement to achieve that strategy and move us toward our mission. The four strategies of the District are
  - i. Strategy #1: We will use Denali Learning to achieve our mission.
  - ii. Strategy #2: We will engage with our community in order to achieve our mission.
  - iii. Strategy #3: We will engage students with current technology in order to achieve our mission.
  - iv. Strategy #4: We will provide authentic learning experiences for our students in order to achieve our mission.

### 4. Finances

- a. FY22 Budget Revision - At the November meeting the School Board adopted a revision to our current operating budget. Overall, this updates the operational deficit for this year to ~775,000 and the district is projected to end the fiscal year with ~\$1,000,000 in unrestricted carryover. The administration is continuing to look for additional expenses reductions we can implement this year, including an update to our corrected Title VI federal grant amount.
- b. FY23 Budget - We continue discussing the FY23 draft budget with the Finance Committee. This month we looked at three scenarios for enrollment and revenue. These range with enrollments at Tri-Valley from 150 students to 160 and to 170 students. All of these scenarios currently do not change staffing structures. All scenarios show significant operational deficits and would eliminate all the currently projected unrestricted carryover for FY22. The Committee reviewed structures at similarly sized schools in the state and is developing options for the board to consider to help bring revenues and expenses into balance.

### 5. Facilities

- a. Anderson Water Well - Anderson Water Well - Our crew worked with a local plumber to pull the water pump. It was discovered that it was installed without some seals in place. The pump was cleaned, the seals installed and the pump replaced. The water has cleared, and the system holds pressure much better but issues still exist that will require a larger

repair. At this point we're confident that the system should continue to operate through to the spring when we can do the repairs more efficiently and safely. We are still awaiting results from our water tests.

- b. Anderson Water Heater - Our crew is almost ready for this installation work. The final part that we need are proper circuits. The panel that serves the water heater is not a common brand so tracking down the correct breaker is a bit of a challenge.
- c. Solar Donation - Curtis continues to work with RES on the installation details and options. I did confirm with Curtis that we will also add some tall chain link fence to help protect the panels from accidental breakage.

#### 6. Personnel

- a. Certified Staff
  - i. No Updates
- b. Classified Staff
  - i. We accepted the resignation of Emile Tolendano as a teaching assistant at Tri-Valley and are recruiting to fill this position
- c. Exempt Staff
  - i. No updates

Dan Polta  
Superintendent  
Denali Borough School District

## DENALI BOROUGH

P.O. Box 480 • Healy, Alaska 99743  
Phone: (907) 683-1330 • Fax: (907) 683-1340  
Email: [dbgovt@mtaonline.net](mailto:dbgovt@mtaonline.net)  
Website: [www.denaliborough.org](http://www.denaliborough.org)



*Clay Walker, Mayor*

### **December 2021 Mayor's Report to the Denali Borough Assembly**

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

#### **Cantwell To Healy Parks Hwy MP 203-259 Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study**

- This study, which began in 2020 and will conclude in early 2022, is currently in an important phase, with a third and final public open house soliciting comment in progress. The DRAFT PEL is available for review and public comment is welcome. The Study sent notices to every PO Box in the borough announcing the Open House, which closes December 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The Draft PEL Study identifies needs and opportunities along the corridor, proposes solutions and prioritizes these future projects. The current draft proposes 29 different solutions totaling over \$400 million in projects.
- The Denali Borough has participated throughout the Study, which is conducted by DOT in partnership with FHWA and NPS, as a member of the Project Advisory Committee, which includes a number of regional stakeholders.
- For more information, and to review and provide comment, please visit the Open House at: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/71287ca577a945eda5687131e13d42>. The interactive map provided with project details is very helpful.
- It is particularly exciting to be conducting the planning and environmental groundwork for solutions addressing the at-grade railroad crossing, the Canyon traffic issues, traffic safety and pedestrian connectivity within and between communities, among many other solutions, at a time when infrastructure funding will be coming available.

#### **Alaska Municipal League (AML) Annual Local Government Conference**

- November 15-17 AML hosted the 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Local Government Conference in Anchorage. Treasurer Connie MacMaster and I attended in person while other staff members participated in select relevant session virtually. AML worked hard to model how to safely put on a large scale conference with active COVID.
- At the annual meeting, Alaska's municipalities voted upon Policy and Position Statements and Resolutions, hosted a Gubernatorial Debate, heard from Sen. Murkowski regarding the signed Infrastructure Bill, shared challenges and successes regarding COVID responses, and conducted a variety of informative sessions on municipal topics.
- Over the course of the week, I also participated in an AML Board of Directors meeting and a Board of Trustees meeting for the Alaska Municipal League Joint Insurance Association.

## **Alaska Conference of Mayors**

- November 17 and 18, the Conference Mayors met in Anchorage following the AML Conference. We shared our communities' infrastructure needs and discussed potential avenues forward. We also had a session with Alaska's Chief Medical Officer Anne Zink and the Director of Public Health Heidi Hedberg. They shared current status updates as well as upcoming changes to COVID testing and reporting. A shift from PCR testing to antigen testing is underway, which has ramifications for reporting because not all tests will be reported to the state. Data points such as positivity rates and case rates, which we've used to date to assess our position, will become less reliable and usable as the state will not be the holder of all testing and case information.

## **Update on grant application to National Telecommunication Infrastructure Administration (NTIA)**

- The Assembly approved the borough's application, filed in partnership with MTA, to NTIA for an \$8 million broadband upgrade project in the borough. NTIA, which had \$288 million available for this program, received 240 applications for over \$2.7 billion.
- NTIA, in order to fully review, evaluate, and make award recommendations, has extended their timeframe of decision and notification – likely until mid-January.

## **Missile Defense Agency (MDA) Hosted Initial Fielding Ceremony for the Long Range Discrimination Radar (LRDR) at Clear Space Force Station**

- Along with Anderson Mayor Thompson, Nenana Mayor Verhagen and Fairbanks North Star Borough Ward, on December 6th I attended the Initial Fielding Ceremony for the new LRDR, which was hosted by Vice Admiral Jon A. Hill, Director of the Missile Defense Agency.
- While the new system still has a lot of testing and refinement ahead, the MDA is pleased to have such a large, complex, and important project turn the corner from construction to operation.
- The level of engineering, inter-agency, and sheer physical work required to construct the most advanced radar system in the world is a truly remarkable feat.

## **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grants Through the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)**

- The borough is working with partners, including the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District and Alaska Trails, in developing and grant application to the EDA under its Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation program.

Happy Holidays to all! As always, feel free to contact me or staff with any questions.

-Clay