

1 **Denali Borough Assembly**
2 **Minutes of the Public Hearing and Regular Meeting**
3 **Virtual Meeting**
4 **February 10, 2021**
5

6 **PUBLIC HEARING**

7 Presiding Officer Jared ZIMMERMAN called the regular meeting to order at 6:02 PM.
8

9 **ORDINANCE 21-01: ALLOCATION FROM THE SOLID WASTE EQUIPMENT RESERVE**
10 **FUND**

11 There were no public comments.
12

13 **REGULAR MEETING**

14 **CALL TO ORDER**

15 Presiding Officer Jared ZIMMERMAN called the regular meeting to order at 6:02 PM.
16

17 **ROLL CALL**

18 Assembly members present: Lisa MINER, Jared ZIMMERMAN, Tallon SHREEVE, Dominic
19 CANALE, Joe CHATFIELD, Jake HILL, and Eileen HOLMES (connected at 6:11 PM).
20 Mayor Clay Walker was also present. Assembly members absent: Krista ZAPPONE and
21 Jeff STENGER.
22

23 Jake HILL MOVED to excuse Assembly Members ZAPPONE and STENGER. The motion
24 was seconded.
25

26 The MOTION TO EXCUSE PASSED by unanimous consent.
27

28 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

29 Vanessa Juszczak with the Denali Chamber of Commerce and Discover Denali provided
30 written comment. (see ATTACHMENT A).
31

32 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

33 Jake HILL MOVED to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded.
34

35 The MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA PASSED by unanimous consent.
36

37 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1 **JANUARY 13, 2021 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

2 Jake HILL MOVED to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2021 meeting. The motion
3 was seconded.

4

5 The MOTION TO APPROVE PASSED by unanimous consent.

6

7 **REPORTS**

8 **DECEMBER 2020 FINANCE REPORT**

9 Jake HILL MOVED to receive the December 2020 Finance Report. The motion was
10 seconded.

11

12 The MOTION TO RECEIVE PASSED by unanimous consent.

13

14 **EMERGENCY MANAGER REPORT**

15 Emergency Manager Chris Noel verbally highlighted information provided in the attached
16 written report (see Attachment B).

17

18 **SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT**

19 Superintendent Dan Polta verbally highlighted information provided in the attached written
20 report (see Attachment C).

21

22 **MAYOR REPORT**

23 Mayor Clay Walker verbally highlighted information provided in the attached written report
24 (see Attachment D).

25

26 **ASSEMBLY COMMENTS**

27 Assembly members offered the following comments:

28

- Thanked those that provided reports.

29

- Expressed concern for the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget development and encouraged a holistic, solutions-based approach to the process.

30

31

- Expressed appreciation for school and borough staff.

32

33 **COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUEST**

34 There were no communication and appearance requests.

35

36 **DRAFT ORDINANCES**

1 **ORDINANCE 21-02: AMMENDING DENALI BOROUGH CODE 5.55 TITLED**
2 **DEPARMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

3 Jake HILL MOVED to introduce Ordinance 21-02. The motion was seconded.

4
5 The roll call VOTE TO INTRODUCE PASSED unanimously.

6
7 Jake HILL MOVED to postpone Ordinance 21-02. The motion was seconded.

8
9 The VOTE TO POSTPONE PASSED by unanimous consent.

10
11 **ORDINANCE 21-03: DECLARATION OF CONTINUED PUBLIC HEALTH DISASTER**
12 **EMERGENCY**

13 Jake HILL MOVED to introduce Ordinance 21-03. The motion was seconded.

14
15 The roll call VOTE TO INTRODUCE PASSED unanimously.

16
17 Jake HILL MOVED to postpone Ordinance 21-03. The motion was seconded.

18
19 The VOTE TO POSTPONE PASSED by unanimous consent.

20
21 **PENDING ORDINANCES**

22 **ORDINANCE 21-01: ALLOCATION FROM THE SOLID WASTE EQUIPMENT RESERVE**
23 **FUND**

24 Jake HILL MOVED to approve Ordinance 21-01. The motion was seconded.

25
26 The roll call VOTE TO APPROVE PASSED unanimously.

27
28 **RESOLUTIONS**

29 There were no Resolutions to consider.

30
31 **OTHER BUSINESS**

32 **EXTEND ORDINANCE 20-07: DECLARATION OF DISASTER EMERGENCY**

33 Jake HILL MOVED to extend Ordinance 20-07 to March 11, 2021. The motion was
34 seconded.

35
36 The VOTE TO EXTEND ORDINANCE 20-07 PASSED by unanimous consent.

1 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

2 There were no public comments.

3

4 **ASSEMBLY COMMENTS**

5 Assembly members commented on the following:

- 6 • Expressed appreciation for a productive and cordial meeting.
- 7 • Expressed appreciation for the increased eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine.
- 8 • Thanked staff providing COIVD testing and those working to organize local
- 9 vaccine clinics.
- 10 • Expressed concern and commitment to work through the upcoming budget
- 11 process.

12

13 **TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

14 The next Assembly meeting will be on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 6:00 PM with a
15 virtual Public Hearing and Regular Meeting.

16

17 **ADJOURN**

18 Dominic CANALE MOVED to adjourn. The motion was seconded. The meeting was
19 adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:26 PM.

20

21 APPROVED: _____

22 Jared Zimmerman, Presiding Officer

23 ATTEST: _____

24 Amber Renshaw, Borough Clerk

25 Date Approved: _____



Hello,

May I start this report by saying a personal thank you. This last year has been a doozy. But I feel incredibly blessed as a Borough resident to have the team we do at the helm. I think the Mayor's office has acted with a remarkable balance of foresightedness, responsibility and action.

The Borough Assembly, the Denali Borough School Board & Superintendent and Borough employees have all shown what government at its finest can look like – with positive collaboration, realistic planning and full engagement. We have weathered the storm as well as possible, and that is thanks entirely to the work done in the past to secure our foundation, as well as the work you all continue to do in the moment. I am grateful for that as a mother, community member and representative of the business community.

That being said, it has been a hard year for the Denali Chamber. Our revenues, even with grant assistance for 2020 were about 40% of the normal, and at this time 2021 doesn't seem like it will be much better. We are learning to be creative, to stick to our mission plan and to do less with more.

As such there will be changes to the operation of the Denali Chamber moving forward. Many events will be eliminated. At this time we plan to keep very few that have high attendance, provided we can secure private partnerships for those – or provided they do not present a cost to the Chamber.

We are streamlining operations between the Denali Visitor Center and the Denali Chamber to make better use of resources and time. We do anticipate a reduction in operational hours, but are hopeful with the changes we've made, that there will be no noticeable difference for those we serve.

Moving forward we aim to hold true to our mission statement "to grow & enhance a vibrant business community". We will begin by:

- Encouraging NPS to examine this seasons DNP access plan and reassess, in the event that this summer does not result in bus service returning on the normal scale.
- Continue examining ways to broaden and support a healthy economic base for the Denali Borough – through a series of partnerships with private sector representatives and stakeholder representatives.
- Increasing our online presence as a valuable resource for local residents and the community.

Vanessa Juszczak

MEMO

To: Denali Borough Assembly Members

From: Chris Noel, Emergency Manager

Date: February 10, 2021

Re: January Assembly Meeting Update

COVID-19: Tomorrow will mark the 36th week that community COVID-19 testing has been offered. The Case Rate, or number of cases per 100,000 individuals in the Other Interior Region of the state, at 25.59/100,000. Within the last 7 days, no new cases have been reported within the Denali Borough. Keep up the great mitigation efforts- this is hard, and the work and effort to stop the spread is pushing our case numbers down.

New testing hours are posted on the Denali Borough website. We have had some heat issues and been unable to keep the testing trailer heated through the bitter cold. Borough staff have jumped right in and managed to make hasty repairs and get things warmed back up. We are asking a lot of the toy-hauler trailer and it has served the program well over the last 36 weeks.

Rent Relief: Check out the Denali Borough Facebook page for a link to Rental and Utility Assistance for those who have been impacted by COVID-19 pandemic.

The Community Testing Program is performing rapid testing by appointment. Who is eligible? Those experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 ; Individuals identified as a close contact of a person testing positive for the COVID-19 virus; Individuals needing a negative test result for a confirmed medical procedure.

Vaccine Update: The State opened up another Tier (Phase 1b Tier 2) starting tomorrow. This is great news, and a much larger segment of our community is now eligible to receive the vaccine. There is an eligibility tool available at covidvax.alaska.gov. Healthcare workers and seniors are STILL eligible and can enroll at anytime, as spots become available.

Point of Dispensing Clinic (POD): The Borough in partnership with a host of community partners will soon open registration for a POD (mass vaccination) clinic in Healy. Spots will be limited, and the Borough will advertise widely when registration is open, with the total number of spots available. As more doses become available, these PODs may happen regularly. Large vaccine administration clinics will help our healthcare workers transition back to their focus on primary care and consolidate resources and effort to administer larger numbers of vaccine efficiently and safely. A robust safety plan will be in place with local EMS providers on site in case they are needed. To date, there have been no severe vaccine reactions locally, and two anaphylactic reactions reported in Alaska. Reports from those who have received their second dose include general feelings of fatigue, mild fever, and sore arms.

The line for a vaccine grew longer today. The state will make the vaccine available to all who want it, and that day is coming.

If individuals need assistance finding or signing up for an appointment, the state has opened an information line, 907-646-3322

The Borough will collect brush at its solid waste facilities from **Firewise** clearing again this summer. We are working with Fairbanks Area Forestry to secure assistance with this effort.



**Superintendent's Report
Denali Borough Assembly
Wednesday, February 10th, 2021**

Dear Denali Borough Assembly and Mayor Walker,

1. Appreciation/Congratulations

- a. Congratulations to Kami Vandeventer. Kami qualified for All Northwest Choir as a Soprano 1 for 2021. All-Northwest is unable to gather physically in Spokane this year, yet it is still a testament to Kami's hard work and focus on constantly improving her signing. Much appreciate to Candice Mudge for nurturing and inspiring that growth.
- b. Thank you to the DBSD teachers who committed their time last weekend to participate in the virtual RTI/MTSS conference. Usually, this event is held in person in Anchorage. Participants from DBSD were Judy Sweeney, Lauren Jeffrey, Katie Stainbrook, Nathan Pitt, Eric Filardi, Kelly Gebauer, Lori Brewer, Karen Martin, Jeni Mason, Gretchen Striker, and me.
- c. Thank you to Stephanie Stickle. Last week was National School Counselors' Week. We appreciate Stephanie's support to all of our students across our District.

2. Smart Start 2020 -

- a. Protocol and Framework Consideration - I gathered and reviewed a collection of information trying to decide whether to propose a revision to the current risk level framework and protocols. This is a challenging thought process as there is some evidence of lower contagion and transmission with children under 10 years old, national achievement data indicating overall, a lower growth in mathematics achievement) in grades 3-8 compared to other years (but not in reading), internal DBSD test data showing our brick and mortar students showing, on average, higher achievement levels this year than last year in math and reading (with a lot of issues with the changed in the make-up of our testing cohort), direct experience that clearly indicating to that the periods of distance learning reduce the quality of the interpersonal experiences of our students that are essential to develop of key skills and attributes we seek to develop in learners, and rough calculations I did comparing our community case rates to some other road system communities and feel that our rates have been much lower. Overall, I feel that a change in the framework and protocols is

Mission Statement

Nurturing, empowering and inspiring today's student to positively shape tomorrow's world.

not recommended at this time. Our system is not perfect, but I do think it has served our diverse community, even with our disagreements, frustrations, and challenges.

- b. Optional Student Testing - Nurse Keith is able to offer opportunities for students to do a test for the coronavirus at school. She provided parents with information and needed permission forms.
- c. Spring Break - I reviewed the school calendar for the week after spring break, March 22nd - 26th. DBSD will be taking a similar approach as we did following the Christmas Break. March 22nd -26th will be a week of distance learning. This will allow individuals who do choose to travel out of state to complete the required social distancing after their return. Distance learning that week will also help limit any local transmission that could result from individuals who travel in-state during. We will also shift parent teacher conferences to Tuesday and hold online classes Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Monday is already scheduled as a non-student day.

3. Finances

- a. FY22 Draft Budget - The Board will consider the third reading of the FY22 Budget at the February Board meeting. If passed, it will be transmitted to the Borough for consideration of the requested local contribution. As drafted, this request is \$2,747,960.
- b. ESSER II Funds - Based on the guidance on the allowable uses for these funds, we adjusted the FY21 Budget and will use these funds for expenses this year such as additional TA services, nursing services, etc.

4. Facilities

- a. Tri-Valley Generator - We are investigating and interesting issue with the generator at Tri-Valley. It was repaired by replacing the control panel and works well, almost. The autostart switches work well, with the generator starting when mains power is interrupted. Currently it is taking about 10 minutes for the transfer switch to activate and provide power back to the building. We are resetting all of the controls. Adjusting them to the current output, input levels, hertz, amps, etc. Once completed we will do a full power shut down at Tri-Valley and test how the generator responds.
- b. Transportation RFP - We have been answering questions from several providers as they develop responses to our RFP.
- c. Cantwell Land Access - After conversation with our Cantwell neighbor, we are making slight updates to the access agreement and should have this agreement signed soon.

5. Personnel

- a. Certified Staff
 - i. No Update

- b. Classified Staff
 - i. No update
- c. Exempt Staff
 - i. No update

Sincerely,
Dan Polta
Denali Borough School District

DENALI BOROUGH

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Clay Walker, Mayor

February 2021 Mayor's Report to the Denali Borough Assembly

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

Denali Borough Community COVID-19 Testing Program

- In addition to the expanded COVID testing offerings (PCR tests) of four days per week and weekly offerings in Cantwell and Anderson, the Community Testing Program is now offering Rapid tests (Antigen tests) twice a week in Healy for those who meet the eligibility criteria. PCR tests remain the gold standard, but we are happy to help meet the rapid testing need and help free health care providers to focus their time and energy on delivering vaccinations.
- We inquired with Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) regarding new federal funding specifically designated for COVID testing and vaccine distribution and requested the pass through of this federal support. We received a positive reply and look forward to a new grant-based program from DHSS to support municipal COVID testing and vaccine support programs.
- On February 1, the testing trailer froze due to low temperatures and cold-related propane issues. We added heat trace to the hose, wrapped the hose in pipe insulation, wrapped a blanket around the tank, and attached an electric heating element to the tank. Those efforts have been successful, to date. We did lose some supplies and are submitting additional resource supply requests to the Unified Command at JBER (Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson).

COVID-19 Vaccination Update

- Many of the nearly 50 borough vaccine recipients in Phase 1A, which includes all health care workers and ems responders, have now received their second dose. Phase 1B, Tier 1 includes all residents 65 and older. The state is focused on completing this tier - vaccinating all interested seniors - this month. Opening the following tiers of eligibility will only occur once this tier is complete, with the March vaccine allocation expected to help inoculate those next eligible.

State Public Health Disaster Emergency Declaration

- The State of Alaska's Emergency Declaration relating to COVID-19 is set to expire at midnight on February 14. The administration has said that they will not extend while the legislature is in session and have introduced SB 56, which extends the period of declared emergency until September 30, 2021 or earlier should the DHSS Commissioner determine there is no longer a public health disaster emergency.
- The bill is not expected to pass prior to February 14, so we should expect a lapse in the declaration and its associated authority. For example, the state would no longer hold authority to require out of state visitors to receive a negative test prior to entry into Alaska. Other pandemic response actions could be limited. At the same time, I have received assurances that our resource request

supply chain will stay mainly intact and that DHSS and Unified Command, who have helped support the borough's response, will continue to provide the same level of support.

- I have encouraged the Senate Committee where it is heard (Health and Social Services) to favorably consider SB 56 and not tie the state's hands in its response to this continuing pandemic. The federal public health emergency declaration is currently in place.

Legislative Organization

- Senator Click Bishop, our Senator representing Senate District C, was named Co-Chair of the most influential committee, the Senate Finance Committee.
- The House has yet to organize, as of this writing, so committee assignments for our House District 6 Representative Mike Cronk will follow.
- I have reached out to both and shared the approved resolutions identifying the borough's legislative priorities.

Bison/Antler Trailhead Parking Project

- The borough has signed the agreed upon grant of easement of roughly 2 acres to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a trailhead parking area north of Antler Creek. The project is on track and, dependent upon bidding timelines, could be constructed this September/October.
- We have had discussions with the National Park Service and DOT regarding submission of another FLAP (Federal Land Access Program) grant application for funding to construct trail improvements. NPS has also agreed to help support the required 9.03% matching contribution.

Parks Highway Cantwell to Ferry Planning and Environmental Linkage Study

- This partnership project between Federal Highways and DOT seeks to plan the future safety, recreational, and access projects for the corridor. The first phase of the study was identifying needs and opportunities and the next phase is the development of improvement options. I attended the third meeting of the Project Advisory Committee on January 27.
- For more information, see: <http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/parkshealypel/>. The website has a new interactive map with identified projects and a comment portal.

Street Naming – A Necessary Step Toward Street Addresses

- The development of borough street name maps, spreadsheets, and the borough E911 GIS system continues. The next step is a public process to consider potential changes due to streets being unnamed not conforming to code naming requirements. We plan to post the maps, street name lists, and recommended changes for the month of March and to receive public comment that month. Then in early April, the borough will host a series of virtual public meetings.

Alaska Municipal League (AML) and NACo Legislative Conferences (Virtual)

- AML is not planning one particular session, but is hosting regular legislative engagements, discussions and forums throughout the session. If you don't receive the emailed AML updates and invitations, they are happy to add you to the list.
- The National Association of Counties is planning a virtual conference this year and is offering a group rate for counties/boroughs who may have a number of officials attending. I have found this conference very informative in the past. The virtual conference will be spread out March 8-26. See the website for more details: <https://www.naco.org/events/2021-virtual-naco-legislative-conference>. Please let the borough office know if are interested, so that we can get the best rate.

Happy February, Happy Valentine's. As always, feel free to contact me or staff if you have any questions.

-Clay