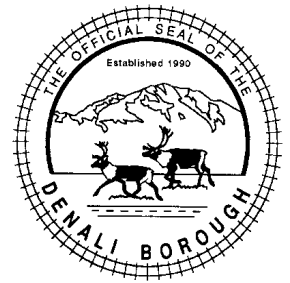


# DENALI BOROUGH

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*Chris Noel, Mayor*

## February 2024 Mayor's Report

### Administrative

- We received a proposal from Alliance CPA's LLC and our intent is to negotiate to ensure the services provided meet the needs of the Borough, then enter into an agreement for services.
- The nonprofit grant deadline is March 1<sup>st</sup>, and I encourage local nonprofits to visit the borough website to apply for this supplemental funding opportunity.
- I responded to an inquiry from the National Park Service regarding compliance with Historic Preservation Law, in the context of fire mitigation and fire effects monitoring in the Denali Front country. Interested parties may learn more at this [link](#) or calling the park information line.
- Led by Treasurer Allison Johnson, Administrative Clerk Salena Mirasole, Finance Clerk Nicole Dalton, and I met to discuss tax penalties and registration management. The Finance committee will consider draft changes to the penalties and fee structure at their February meeting. Proposed changes would be presented via a Code Ordinance to the Assembly.
- Sharing a big thank you to borough staff who put together and led a Newly Elected Officials Training. The training is recorded and is available for viewing on the Borough YouTube page.

### Solid Waste

- Staff met to discuss hours of operation at the Cantwell Transfer Station. The intent is to change hours to match those of the Healy transfer station. We welcome comment on this proposed change.
- A reminder, Solid Waste Tipping Fee increase (Ordinance 23-19) takes effect starting April 1. The rate will increase to \$150 per ton.

### Land Planning and Community Development

- ANCSA 17(d)(1) Withdrawals public meeting: The Bureau of Land Management held a public meeting in Cantwell to solicit public comments on 4 Alternatives proposed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) draft. More information can be found at this link: <https://www.ahtnatribal.org/blm-17d1-overview>
- I participated in two kick-off meetings for exciting planning and design projects upcoming in the Denali Borough:
  - Denali area airport planning study: This state funded effort, part of a larger statewide aviation assessment, will look at the five Department of Transportation maintained airports in the Denali Borough. Aviation Planner with RESPEC Becky Cronkhite and her team are crafting the public outreach plan and reaching out to stakeholders. Use and condition of the Summit, Kantishna, Gold King, Healy River, and Clear airports will be documented.
  - Separated Pathways: Alaska Department of Transportation staff are beginning a multi-year process to design separated pathways alongside the Park Highway. The three segments include Carlo to Crabbies Crossing, the new Antler Ridge trailhead to Suntrana Road in Healy, and Suntrana north to Stampede Road. The Denali Borough received funding for the design work through Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) in the 2023

Federal Fiscal Year appropriations bill, sponsored by Senator Murkowski's office. Visit the project website for more details and look out for opportunities to comment on the design effort. <https://denali-borough-separated-paths-akdot.hub.arcgis.com/> .

## **Emergency Planning**

- On Friday February 1<sup>st</sup>, Emergency Manager Forest Shreeve and I paid a visit to the City of Anderson to meet with city staff and tour the situation with the City sewer system. Unfortunately, 1 year after the last infiltration and freeze up event (almost to the day), the City experienced another dramatic increase in groundwater infiltration to the piped sewer system. To highlight the volume; lift station pumps that transport wastewater to the lagoon northwest of the city have been running constantly for approximately two weeks. Under normal conditions, these pumps turn on and off for minutes at a time, periodically throughout the day. The City is considering a disaster declaration to summarize current conditions and request support. I commend the City for their response, and as of this writing, they have the situation stabilized. We will standby to support their response.
- Congratulations to new Fire Chiefs Tess Morin (MVFD), Megan Scoles (TVVFD), Nathan Grimes (AVFD)!
- I met with Tri-Valley volunteer fire department to discuss service for the upcoming season, the corresponding grant request, and the Denali Emergency Services Association.

## **Items of Interest**

- I opted into a Mayors Education Coalition, and we held our first meeting on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. This will allow mayors with municipal school districts to collaborate and speak with a unified voice towards state decision making regarding education. The effort is facilitated by the Alaska Municipal League.
- I met with Holland America Princess employee's Bonnie Westlund, Ralph Samuels, and Dave McGlothlin to share updates. Topics of discussion included Winterfest, the Canyon Clinic, and the summer outlook. They are engaged in planning for the upcoming season, and at the same time offered to provide an operational tour to both staff and our elected officials.
- The Alaska Municipal League in coordination with Golden Valley Electric Association was awarded funding through the US Department of Energy towards repurposing energy assets. This funding will support workforce training and community engagement. The funding will be used for helping the community build capacity and provide workforce training and economic development capacity building related to the repurposing of the Healy Unit 2.
- Winterfest will kick-off Friday February 23<sup>rd</sup>, with an event at the McKinley Village Community Center. A complete schedule is available at Denali National Park's website.

Please contact me or borough staff at any time with questions, comments, or concerns,

- Chris