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**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Denali Borough Planning Commission
Denali Borough Office
January 17, 2024**

REGULAR MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

Presiding Officer Kesslyn Tench called the regular meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

ROLL CALL

Planning Commissioners present were: Kesslyn Tench, Mark MENKE, James Ward, Steve JONES, Baxter MERCER, Susan BRAUN and Erik HAUGEN. Mayor Chris Noel was present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

James WARD MOVED to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded.

The VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA PASSED by unanimous show of hands.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

James WARD MOVED to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded.

The VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES PASSED by unanimous show of hands.

COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUEST

There was no communication and appearance requests.

REPORTS

MAYOR

Mayor Chris Noel verbally highlighted information provided in the attached written report (SEE ATTACHMENT A).

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

Community Development Director Teresa Floberg reported that the Denali Borough applications for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and the Community Transportation Program scored well during the competitive review process with two of those applications scoring high enough that they have a reasonable chance to be awarded.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER REPORT FROM THE ASSEMBLY MEETING

1 Planning Commissioner Baxter MERCER reported the following from the Assembly
2 Meeting:

- 3 • The Denali Borough area Seat on the Golden Valley Electric Association
4 Board is open for nomination.
- 5 • The Denali Borough received a grant to help support backup generator
6 projects at the Tri-Valley School, McKinley Volunteer Fire Department and the
7 Cantwell Fire Department.

8
9 **PLATS AND CONDITIONAL USES**

10 There were no plats and conditional uses to consider.

11
12 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

13 There was no unfinished business to consider.

14
15 **NEW BUSINESS**

16 **REVIEW PUBLIC FEEDBACK FROM THE LIGNITE SUBDIVISION**
17 **CONCEPTUAL DESIGN.**

18 Community Development Director Teresa Floberg reviewed the public feedback
19 received regarding the Lignite area subdivision conceptual design. The public survey
20 remains open and the Planning Commission will need to continue to review the
21 feedback provided.

22
23 **POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS FOR RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION PLANNING.**

24 The Commission discussed continuing to refine the conceptual design of the Lignite
25 area and also considered starting work on a conceptual design in a different location
26 of Denali Borough land.

27
28 The Commission scheduled a work session for February 6, 2024 at 6:00 PM to
29 continue the review of the public feedback from the Lignite subdivision conceptual
30 design survey.

31
32 The Commission scheduled a work session to begin the February 21, 2024 regular
33 meeting to consider a conceptual design process for the Stampede area of Denali
34 Borough land.

35
36 The Commission determined that the discussion of road standards will be an agenda
37 item for the regular meeting on February 21, 2024.

38
39 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

40 Healy area residents Zach Cizmowski, Zabrina Cizmowski and David Hayes
41 provided the following public comments:

- 42 • Encouraged the Commission to consider other areas of Denali Borough land for
43 subdivision development.
- 44 • Encouraged a phased approach to subdivision development.

1
2 **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

3 Planning Commissioners provided the following comments:

- 4 • Welcomed Mayor Chris Noel.
5 • Expressed appreciation for the public feedback received regarding the
6 conceptual subdivision design.
7

8 **PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT TO THE ASSEMBLY**

9 Commissioner Kesslyn TENCH offered to provide the Planning Commission report
10 at the Wednesday, February 14, 2024 Denali Borough Assembly meeting at the
11 Denali Borough Office.
12

13 **TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

14 The next meeting will be as follows:

- 15 • Tuesday, February 6, 2024 Work Session to review public feedback from the
16 conceptual design survey.
17 • Wednesday, February 21, 2024 Work Session and Regular Meeting
18

19 **ADJOURNMENT**

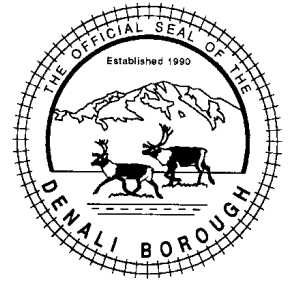
20 Presiding Officer Kesslyn TENCH adjourned the meeting at 7:41 PM.
21
22
23

24 APPROVED: _____
25 Kesslyn TENCH, Presiding Officer
26

27
28 ATTEST: _____
29 Amber Renshaw, Clerk Date Approved: _____

DENALI BOROUGH

P.O. Box 480 • Healy, Alaska 99743
Phone: (907) 683-1330 • Fax: (907) 683-1340
Email: dbgov@denaliborough.com
Website: www.denaliborough.org



Chris Noel, Mayor

January 2024 Mayor's Report

Administrative

- Finger printing for employment purposes is now available at the Denali Borough office, at no cost. The Alaska State Troopers formerly provided this service. Administrative Assistant Salena Mirasole has taken the required training, and we anticipate one or two additional staff taking the short training.
- I signed a one-year contract extension with Borough legal counsel, Levesque Law Group. This is the second of three one-year extension options of the contract.
- Sharing a moment of appreciation to our finance team and auditor for the Fiscal Year 2023 Audit. The audit was performed under a one-year agreement with Alliance CPA's following the issuance of competitive solicitation to which we received no responses. We are proud of the unmodified opinion and the Boroughs strong financial position. Look out for a recommendation on audit services soon.
- Renovations and rearrangements continue at both the downstairs *Community Planning* office, and the upstairs *Mayors* office.

Solid Waste

- I met with Solid Waste Operations Manager Scott Wright and Treasurer Allison Johnson regarding solid waste operations, and we discussed staffing levels at the facilities, and preliminary discussions about next year's budget.
- A reminder, Solid Waste Tipping Fee increase (Ordinance 23-19) takes effect starting April 1.

Land Planning and Community Development

- The Panguingue-B boundary survey was received by the borough office and at the same time, submitted for Department of Natural Resources review. The borough received initial survey instructions and put the boundary survey out to bid in 2013, and the project stalled for many years. The borough is pleased to be moving forward, and this is a step in the process of subdividing lots in the proposed Lignite subdivision.
- It's not too late to submit comments on the conceptual Lignite subdivision designs, visit www.denaliborough.org/communityplanning.
- January 17th is the deadline for the public to submit their comments for both the proposed recreation project concepts and the conceptual subdivision design.
 - www.denaliborough.org/trailsandtransportation
 - www.denaliborough.org/communityplanning
- The State's Project Evaluation Board (PEB) met the third week of December to rate and rank the projects from around Alaska that met the minimum criteria threshold for both the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Community Transportation Program (CTP) grant. The Denali Borough submitted three projects to these programs:
 - TAP: Separated highway pedestrian path from Suntrana Rd to Antler Ridge parking lot.

- TAP: sidewalks along roads that converge at Tri-Valley School (Suntrana, Coal, and School).
- CTP: resurfacing and widening of Otto Lake Road to accommodate shoulders for pedestrian traffic (similar to the Healy Spur Road project).
- Our projects ranked competitively statewide. The TAP projects ranked # 4 & 5; the CTP project ranked #11. The PEB's results will be forwarded to the DOT Commissioner, and we expect to hear project award announcements this month.

Addressing

- [Applications](#) are still being processed and the next order of house number signs should be submitted next week.
- Land Planner Marsha Lambert is working on getting Google and Apple Maps updated with the new street names.

Emergency Planning

- The staff team met to discuss the Memorandum of Agreement with Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for a borough wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). We plan to solicit the project competitively and anticipate a robust community involvement process aligned around the summer fire and tourism season.
- I joined Emergency Manager Forest Shreeve for an opportunity to tour the Clear Space Force fire station and meet with local fire and EMS leadership. Items of discussion included the CWPP, Borough Wide Mutual Aid agreement, and Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).

Items of Interest

- Our seat on the [Golden Valley Electric Association \(District 7\)](#), is up for election in 2024. This is an important role representing our member-owners in the strategic direction of the electric cooperative. The candidate application deadline is January 17th, and anyone interested in applying may reach out to District 7 Nominating Committee Chair, Kathy Hennigan.
- Nominations are still open for the 11th annual [Mayors Community Service Award](#). Please visit the website or contact the office for a nomination form and recognize that local person who does so much for our community.
- The Alaska Municipal League (AML) winter legislative conference is February 20-22 and I will be traveling down to share our priorities, meet with our Legislators and staff, and take part in the conference. Two important issues identified in resolutions 23-33 and 23-34 include a re-capitalization of the Community Assistance Fund and robust support for the Major School Maintenance grant program.

Moment of Gratitude

- It is an incredible honor to be seated here, representing our communities. It is humbling to return to local government. To our new Assembly Members, thank you for stepping up to serve. To the outgoing Members, and Mayor Walker- I am profoundly grateful to be following in the path you laid out for us. We can all be proud of the Borough staff team in place, and they have been gracious and welcoming in helping me on-board.

Wishing you a warm January,

- Chris