

# DENALI BOROUGH

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*Chris Noel, Mayor*

## January 2024 Mayor's Report to the Assembly

### 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](http://www.denaliborough.org/communityplanning).
- January 17<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.denaliborough.org/trailsandtransportation)
  - [www.denaliborough.org/communityplanning](http://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 17<sup>th</sup>, and anyone interested in applying may reach out to District 7 Nominating Committee Chair, Kathy Hennigan.
- Nominations are still open for the 11<sup>th</sup> 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