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**Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
Denali Borough Planning Commission  
Denali Borough Office  
June 19, 2024**

**REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Deputy Presiding Officer James Ward called the regular meeting to order at 6:05PM.

**ROLL CALL**

Planning Commissioners present were: Mark MENKE, James Ward, Steve JONES, Baxter MERCER, and Susan BRAUN.

Mayor Chris Noel was also present.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Denali Borough resident Joe Meyer spoke in support of the PC RESOLUTION 24-07.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

BAXTER MERCER MOVED to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

SUSAN BRAUN MOVED to approve the minutes from the May 15, 2024 Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded.

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

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Mark MENKE nominated James WARD as Presiding Officer and Baxter MERCER nominated MARK MENKE as Deputy Presiding Officer. The nomination was seconded. There were no other nominations.

The VOTE TO ELECT JAMES WARD AS PRESIDING OFFICER AND MARK MENKE AS DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER PASSED by unanimous show of hands.

**COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUEST**

There were no Communication and Appearance requests.

**REPORTS**

**PLANNING COMMISSIONER REPORT FROM THE ASSEMBLY MEETING**

1 Mayor Chris Noel reported that the Assembly passed the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget  
2 which includes funding for conceptual design projects for the Yanert and  
3 Panguingue Stampede parcels of Denali Borough land.

#### 4 5 **BOROUGH PLANNER**

6 Denali Borough Planner Marsha Lambert reported the following:

- 7 • Maps are being created to assist with the Community Wildfire Protection Plan  
8 and the Community & Outdoor Recreation Plan.
- 9 • Street sign inventory has been conducted.
- 10 • Working on a maintenance plan for street sign replacement/management.

#### 11 12 **MAYOR**

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

#### 15 16 **PLATS AND CONDITIONAL USES**

17 There were no Plats and Conditional Uses to consider.

#### 18 19 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

20 There was no unfinished business to consider. Road construction standards will be  
21 discussed during a work session following the regular meeting.

#### 22 23 **NEW BUSINESS**

#### 24 **PC RESOLUTION PC 24:07 SUPPORT MCKINLEY COMMUNITY CENTER EFFORTS 25 TO ACQUIRE TITLE TO THE MCKINLEY VILLAGE PIT**

26 MARK MENKE MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION PC 24-07. The motion was  
27 seconded.

28  
29 Steve JONES reviewed the Resolution.

30  
31 The VOTE TO APPROVE RESOLUTION PC 24-07 PASSED by unanimous roll call  
32 vote.

#### 33 34 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

35 There were no public comments.

#### 36 37 **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

38 Planning Commissioners expressed the following:

- 39 • Expressed thanks for the support of Resolution 24-07
- 40 • Spruce Beetles have reached Lignite Subdivision

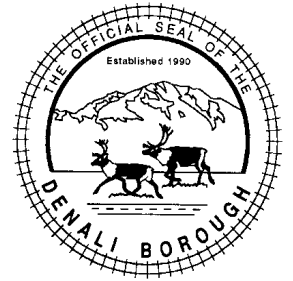
#### 41 42 **PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT TO THE ASSEMBLY**

43 Commissioner MERCER offered to provide the Planning Commission report at the  
44 Wednesday, July 10, 2024 Denali Borough Assembly meeting at the Cantwell  
45 School.



# DENALI BOROUGH

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**Chris Noel, Mayor**

## June 2024 Mayor's Report

### Administrative

- Tax Audits- The borough will resume tax audits this year, observing borough code and past practice and following a hiatus during COVID. Three overnight accommodation operators and one from a pool of alcohol and marijuana retailers will be chosen at random for this audit, performed by our contract audit firm Alliance CPAs LLC. We anticipate audits will be conducted approximately late September.
- The upstairs office renovation is nearly complete, and aside from a small drywall repair project, the office space is “back together.” Stop by and have a look. A special thanks to Borough Clerk Amber Renshaw who single handedly orchestrated the effort, painted nearly the entire office, and it looks great.
- Address signs are available for pickup downstairs in the Planning Office- feel free to call ahead to ensure your sign is available.

### Solid Waste

- The recycle trailers are back at each of our solid waste facilities. Check out the website for current hours, and (thanks to Finance Clerk and public information guru Nicole Dalton) an updated “Recycling guide” for borough solid waste facilities.
- Our insurer, the Alaska Municipal League Joint Insurance Agency scheduled a site visit to the landfill this week. These regular visits offer a chance to review our operation and provide feedback, and allow us a chance to ask questions of our

### Emergency Planning

- All three solid waste facilities accept brush from Firewise clearing. Creating defensible space around your home or business is one of the best, most inexpensive ways you can reduce the risk of loss from a wildfire. Stumps, straw, leaves, cones, and construction debris are not accepted in the brush piles.
- Emergency Manager Forest Shreeve and I attended a tabletop exercise at Denali National Park, commemorating the 1924 fire that impacted park headquarters. The scenario considered a fire start in the Denali front county. It was a great opportunity to connect with partners in the fire management arena and consider our own Emergency Operations Plan. The borough is clear eyed on our role in providing alert and warning information and coordinating evacuations if needed.
- The Community Wildfire Protection Plan contractor is in the borough this week driving around to assess our communities and connecting with various project partners. We expect a rough draft of the plan by September.

### Land Planning and Community Development

- Healy Pedestrian Pathway Project. We are reviewing the Memorandum of Agreement (DOT/DB) for this project. During an on-site visit, we walked the project footprint with DOT planners and engineering staff to discuss current pedestrian patterns, ATV use, and impacts to homeowners. The goal is to work components of this project into the short summer field season, with a target construction date of 2026.

- The online open house is underway for the Separated Pathway design project. The segment from Carlo to Crabbies Crossing and the Antler Ridge Trailhead to Stampede road are in the design phase. If you have feedback about path width, routing, or any other thoughts please [visit the project website](#) and provide feedback to the design team.
- Kickoff for the Panguingue Stampede and Yanert Subdivision Conceptual Design process- Land Planner Marsha Lambert, Borough Clerk Amber Renshaw and I met with Design Alaska staff on-site at both the Stampede Panguingue and Yanert parcels to kick-off the conceptual design project. Design Alaska is starting with the concepts put forward by the Planning Commission and incorporating some of the feedback received during the last conceptual design process. Deliverables include three concepts for each parcel to review by the end of the summer.
- Over 50 volunteers celebrated National Trails Day at the new Antler Ridge trailhead. The group tackled a variety of maintenance tasks including preparing the site for a memorial bench for Sam Brown. The Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation sponsored lunch by Jam Jams, in addition to an interpretive kiosk created by Isabel Brown. Future improvements include a paved ADA accessible trail, and picnic tables. Thanks to the Community and Outdoor Recreation Committee for hosting this event.

### Items of Interest

- Alaska Future Ecology Institute- I have submitted a letter of support of Congressional Directed Spending for a novel and ambitious project to study the impacts of large herbivore re-introduction on landscapes and permafrost. The Alaska Future Ecology Institute (Institute) desires to lease up to 7000 acres of state land on the north end of the borough for a large experiment. Based on code, this action would not require any local action, but the executive director is interested in broad public outreach. The planned experiment is in its infancy and has secured a fraction of the total amount needed to implement a large experiment, like Pleistocene Park in Siberia.
- Capital Budget Summary – While we wait on the Governors consideration of the FY 2025 budget, I am thankful to the Legislature for their work. The budget transmitted includes two Assembly priorities including a recapitalization of the Community Assistance fund in both the FY 2024 and FY 2025 budget, meaning a full payment to municipalities in FY 2025 and FY 2026. The Capital budget also includes \$26.5 million for major school maintenance, funding the Tri- Valley school partial roof replacement project and 10 other projects.

### Staffing

- Please help me welcome Stephanie Ford as our new Community Development Director. Stephanie joins us with project and program management experience and is a capable facilitator, collaborative by nature, who will make an excellent addition to the borough team.

Wishing you a safe summer.

- Chris