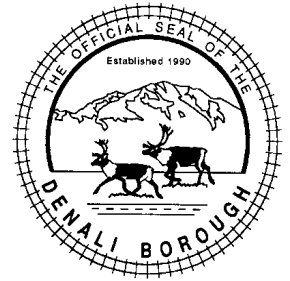


DENALI BOROUGH

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

March 2024 Mayor's Report

Administrative

- I attended an Alaska Municipal League Housing "Office Hours" web meeting. Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) presented affordable and workforce housing programs. The Denali Borough School District has explored the use of the Rural Professional Housing Program, but the required project elements increased the project cost above what the district could build outside of the program.

Solid Waste

- The tipping fee at the Denali Borough landfill will increase on April 1, to \$150 a ton. At this time, the fee at the transfer station's will remain the same.
- During the deep cold, we had a flat tire on the rock truck. This highlights the general age and poor condition of these tires. Solid waste staff kept it aired up as best they could, but the tires are ready for replacement. The current set came with the truck from the Municipality of Anchorage. Due to the drive system, the tires need to remain in close spec and must be replaced as a set (of six). We have a quote for a replacement set.
- We posted a Seasonal Heavy Equipment Operator position at the Landfill. This position will increase capacity as we develop "outside of the back gate."

Land Planning and Community Development

- The revised Lease Application was submitted for attorney review.
- We were excited to learn that Senator Murkowski was able to secure \$640,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) in H.R. 4366, the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2024. When signed into law, the funding will go towards the design and engineering of the Crabbies Crossing to Park entrance separated pathway. On this note, our intent is to submit a FY 2025 CDS request for the section from Cantwell to Carlo Creek.
- On another exciting note, Alaska Department of Transportation announced the "tentative" [award](#) of the Healy to Antler Ridge Separated Path Transportation Alternative Project (TAP) project. This award is contingent on federal acceptance of the 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- Complete Streets Policy workshop- March 21st. Alaska Department of Transportation planners will host an in-person workshop, to share information and gather feedback to guide the creation of a Complete Streets policy. The goal of complete streets is to include multiple modes of transportation (pedestrian, bicycles etc) into transportation projects.

Emergency Planning

- The Request for Proposals (RFP 24-01) for a borough wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan is open. Proposals are due March 26. The full solicitation is available on the Borough webpage.

- The Local Emergency Planning Committee will be kicking off a restart on March 28th 6- 8 PM. In the borough office. This committee is tasked with advising local government about hazards present in the borough. The meeting is open to the public.
- City of Anderson Update: As of Monday, March 11, the City pumps appear to be keeping water in the lift station at a level that does not require extra tanker shuttles. The City, Borough, and State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management have been meeting twice a week to check-in and discuss updates. The Borough has received and will pay a portion of City's February Alaska Waste bill for water shuttles.
- The Second Annual Health and Safety Fair will be held April 19th. There will be a wide variety of booths, prizes, and giveaways. Look out for flyers and I hope to see you there.

Items of Interest

- Trip to Juneau: Assembly Member Alexander, Canale and I had a productive trip to Juneau. Highlights included meetings with our Representative McCabe, and Senator Shower. In addition, we scheduled meetings with seven other representatives and senators who hold positions on committees such as House and Senate Finance and Education. We advocated for a robust increase to the Base Student Allocation, recapitalization of the Community Assistance Fund, and a healthy capital budget for the Major School Maintenance program. We heard from many about the challenging financial position the state is in, with revenue largely based on a single industry and a volatile commodity. Flexibility in appropriation has also allowed statutory programs (including the Permanent Fund Dividend) to diverge from our means. I met with a Department of Environmental Conservation staff member to discuss our needs related to the Anderson Sewer System.
- I also signed a letter of support for a DOT project to replace and upgrade the Rex bridge over the Nenana River, at Mile 276 of the Parks Highway. While this project was not on our radar, AKDOT is applying for a grant through the Bridge Investment Program, and I am glad to lend support towards a project to replace this 60-year-old bridge, a critical link in the flow of tourism and commerce.
- Mayors Policy Statement on Education: Along with 17 other Mayors from across the state, all with municipal school districts, I signed on to a policy statement to submit to the Legislature. It advocates for a long-term funding fix including a robust BSA increase and inflation adjustment. Teacher recruitment and retention initiatives should be considered separately from a BSA increase. It also takes the position that new or alternative (charter) schools should be made at the local level, and built into the current system.
- Interior Community Health Center will be restarting in-person care at the Healy Clinic ICHC restarting in-person care in Healy in early April.
- Railbelt Mental Health and Addictions now has a Prevention Educator based out of the Healy office. They are also actively recruiting for a Childrens Mental Health clinician to be based in their catchment area. This increases the organization's capacity by adding a provider dedicated to the 0 – 22 year old population.
- Following tragic incidents on the Denali Highway involving snowmachines and dog teams, AK Department of Transportation and Public Facilities has implemented a winter safety pilot project. All users interested in winter safety along the Denali Highway may take a public survey [HERE](#).
- GVEA Strategic Generation Plan- The Golden Valley Electric Association board voted unanimously to modify the Strategic Generation Plan, previously adopted in June, 2022. In addition to continuing emissions controls work on Healy Unit 1, the revised plan is to keep Healy Unit 2 operating until such time as "alternative sources of reliable, lower cost energy are available."

Happy Spring,

- Chris