

DENALI BOROUGH

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Clay Walker, Mayor

May 2023 Mayor's Report to the Denali Borough Assembly

This report speaks primarily to non-agenda items. Agenda items will be discussed in meeting.

Health and Safety Fair April 28th

- Many thanks to the service providers, volunteers, staff, and sponsors who all helped put together a robust health and safety fair! Special thanks to Alaska Public Health, State Troopers, and to the Food Bank for the salmon giveaway!

Spring Community Clean Ups

- Spring clean-ups of the public roadways are being organized across the borough. Many thanks to those community organizers and to those helping to clean up after a long winter. Per usual, the Denali Borough will accept free of charge those yellow bags with roadside trash at each of our three solid waste facilities. Let's keep the scene clean!

Legislative Update

- The headline today: "It's all in flux: Alaska budget disputes unresolved on the dividend, education funding" pretty much sums it up. While much of the operating budget is similar between the in House and Senate versions, differences remain on the size of the PFD, education funding, and the draw on the CBR (savings).
- The last day of the 90-day session is Wednesday May 17, so an extension or a special session are both very real possibilities. Even if the legislature reaches concurrence prior to May 17, there is discussion about a potential October special session focused on a sustainable fiscal plan, where new revenue will be on the table.
- The fact that the Alaska North Slope Crude Oil price per barrel has dropped to \$71.50, down 6.7% from last month and 16% from last year, has exacerbated the budgetary challenges.

Interior Alaska Transportation Plan

- This plan is in the information gathering phase and the Planning Team is traveling to communities to hear local thoughts.
- On Tuesday May 23rd from 5:30 to 7 pm, the team will be at In His Shadow Ministries at MP 251 Parks Hwy. Come share your thoughts about the future of transportation in the area.
- See the project website for more information:
<https://www.interioralaskatransportationplan.com/>

FY 24 Budget and Audited FY 22 Financial Statements

- As we've been reporting for months, the preparation and auditing of the FY22 financial statements took extra time this year due to combination of accounting support absences, new auditors, a new borough treasurer, and more and different federal receipts than usual.
- Since our forward funding requirement includes FY 22 audited numbers in the calculation, the development of the FY 24 budget stalled at the end.
- We are happy to report that the Annual Financial Report for FY 22 is complete, and the FY 24 budget is ready for consideration.
- Treasurer Allison Johnson has worked extremely hard and effectively to help get us to this point.

Update to Solid Waste Landfill Operating Permit

- Our operating permit has included a requirement of an annual volumetric "as-built" survey. The borough requested that this requirement be shifted from annual to once every two years since we scale and track all incoming waste, plan our development without the assistance of this survey, and, as we average just 3,700 tons annually, things don't change very fast at the Denali Borough Landfill. We were pleased to have the Department of Environmental Conservation Solid Waste Division agree to the request and amend our operating permit.

Wildland Fire Preparedness and Prevention Week May 7 – 13th

- As the snow melts, our preparedness efforts shift to the wildland fire season ahead. Burn permits are required beginning April 1. Visit <https://dnr.alaska.gov/burn> to learn more and apply for a permit. You'll also find the Firewise brochure on the Forestry website with tips on how to make your property more fire resilient.

Forestry Grant for Community Wildland Protection Plan (CWPP)

- While the borough was unsuccessful in an earlier grant application in pursuit of CWPP funding, the Division of Forestry recently informed the borough that we will be allocated an equivalent amount through a different mechanism in order to develop a borough wide CWPP. More on this as it develops, but very good news.

Completed my MPA Degree

- I offer my thanks and appreciation to borough staff, borough assembly, and my family who all supported my time and efforts along the way to receiving my Master of Public Administration from the University of Alaska Southeast. I started in fall 2018 and finished spring 2023. My studies often dived into borough-related issues and topics, which deepened my understanding, appreciation, and, hopefully, effectiveness.

Happy May, happy spring.

As always, feel free to contact me or staff with any questions.

- Clay