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**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Denali Borough Planning Commission
Denali Borough Office
November 20, 2024**

REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING

CALL TO ORDER

Presiding Officer James Ward called the regular meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

ROLL CALL

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

Mayor Chris Noel was also present.

Planning Commissioners absent were: Zack RUSSELL.

Mark MENKE MOVED TO EXCUSE THE ABSENT MEMBER. The motion was seconded.

The VOTE TO EXCUSE PASSED by unanimous consent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

The VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA PASSED by unanimous consent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Baxter MERCER MOVED to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2024 Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded.

The VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES PASSED by unanimous consent.

COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUEST

Jenn Miller with Renewable IPP, LLC provided a presentation regarding a possible lease application for a solar farm project on Denali Borough land near the Clear airstrip.

REPORTS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

Community Development Director Stephanie Ford provided the attached written report (SEE ATTACHMENT A).

1
2 **BOROUGH PLANNER**

3 Denali Borough Planner Marsha Lambert reported that she has been working with
4 Renewable IPP. on their lease application.

5
6 **MAYOR**

7 Mayor Chris Noel highlighted information provided in the attached written report
8 (SEE ATTACHMENT B).

9
10 **PLATS AND CONDITIONAL USES**

11 There were no plats and conditional uses to consider.

12
13 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

14 **ROAD CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS**

15 Steve JONES MOVED TO INTRODUCE ROAD CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS.
16 The motion was seconded.

17
18 The VOTE TO INTRODUCE ROAD CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS PASSED by
19 unanimous consent.

20
21 Steve JONES MOVED TO CLARIFY ROAD WIDTHS BY ADDING THE WORD
22 "MINIMUM" WHEN DESCRIBING ROAD WIDTHS. The motion was seconded.

23
24 The VOTE TO ADD THE WORD "MINIMUM" WHEN DESCRIBING ROAD WIDTHS
25 PASSED by unanimous consent.

26
27 Baxter MERCER MOVED TO COMBINE ALLEY AND ACCESS EASEMENT AND
28 RENAME THEM TO "ACCESS ROAD". The motion was seconded.

29
30 The VOTE TO COMBINE ALLEY AND ACCESS EASEMENT AND RENAME THEM
31 TO "ACCESS ROAD" PASSED by unanimous consent.

32
33 Mark MENKE MOVED TO COMBINE FRONTAGE ROAD WITH LOCAL ROAD
34 AND KEEP THE NAME LOCAL ROAD. The motion was seconded.

35
36 The VOTE TO COMBINE FRONTAGE ROAD WITH LOCAL ROAD AND KEEP
37 THE NAME LOCAL ROAD PASSED by unanimous consent.

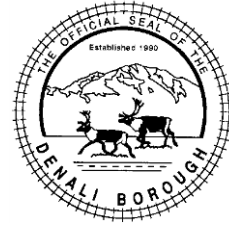
38
39 Mark MENKE MOVED TO STRIKE CUL-DE-SAC AS A ROAD CLASSIFICATION.
40 The motion was seconded.

41
42 The VOTE TO STRIKE CUL-DE-SAC AS A ROAD CLASSIFICATION PASSED with
43 JONES opposed.

44
45 Mark MENKE MOVED TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

DENALI BOROUGH

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR UPDATE

November 13, 2024

Land Use

- **Subdivision Draft Concept Designs for Stampede Panguingue and Yanert**
 - Borough staff shared concept designs with Planning Commission during their October meeting and staff are working with Design Alaska on updates to the concept designs based upon Planning Commission feedback. It was proposed to hold public meetings in communities nearest to the subdivisions in the spring - McKinley Village in March to discuss the Yanert concept design and in Healy in April to discuss the Stampede Panguingue design.
- **MOA between BLM and Ahtna, Inc., for 17(b) easement administration**
 - The BLM and Ahtna, Inc. signed a multi-year self-governance funding agreement to improve management of easements that provide access to public lands and waters across privately owned Ahtna lands. This agreement transfers administration of these easements, known as 17(b) easements under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), from the BLM's Glennallen Field Office to Ahtna, Inc., the Alaska Native Regional Corporation with lands stretching across the southcentral interior of Alaska.
 - Under this new agreement, Ahtna will administer this easement program on BLM's behalf, supporting the public's continued access to public lands and waters while respecting privately owned Ahtna lands. Ahtna will advance those goals by building a common dataset of easements and improving public signage, fostering greater public understanding of land ownership patterns in the region.
- **Community and Outdoor Recreation Plan**
 - The Plan was posted on the borough website and public comment period is open November 1-30. Notifications were also sent to land managing partners in the Borough. Future timelines are:
 - December 5 – CORC meeting to review public comments
 - December – Any needed revisions made to the plan
 - January – present to Planning Commission
 - February – present to Assembly

Transportation

- **Interior Alaska Transportation Plan**
 - The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is updating the Interior Alaska Transportation Plan (IATP), a 20-year regional multimodal transportation plan that will guide future public investments in transportation infrastructure in the interior Alaska region. [Northern Region Project, Alaska DOT&PF](#)

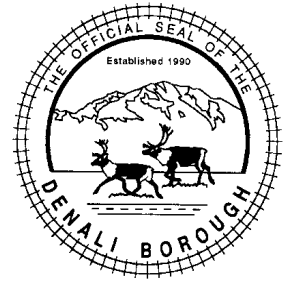
Community Development

- **Fall Vaccine Clinic – November**
 - Explored a new partnership with Fairweather Medical Services, which has been funded by the state to provide mobile vaccine clinics through June 2024, to offer a broader range of vaccines over two days.
 - Covid and Flu Clinic – 86 attendees, 143 vaccines administered
 - Adult and Child Vaccine Clinic – 25 attendees, 48 vaccines administered
- **Quarterly Community Development Workgroup**
 - Will be hosting the quarterly meeting within the next month.
- **Grant Applications**
 - Community Change Grant (EPA) – working with Alaska Municipal League, School District, and Denali Community Foundation on an application with school infrastructure improvements as the “heart” of the application. Now exploring wrapping improvements to the Tri-Valley Community Center and McKinley Village Community Center into the grant to create a network of 5 community resilience hubs in the Denali Borough.
 - Scenic Byways Grant Program – considering an application this year or in future years.
 - Recreation Economy for Rural Communities – submitted a grant for planning technical assistance in mid-October.

Stephanie Ford
Community Development Director

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Chris Noel, Mayor

November 2024 Mayor's Report

Administrative

- Personnel Policy- Treasurer Allison Johnson and I have been working earnestly on a draft revision to the Personnel Policy. Last updated in 2022, this document is accepted by each employee upon hiring. After a series of staff meetings to review and revise, by past practice, the policy will come before the Assembly for adoption.

Solid Waste

- Ground Water Monitoring Results- We received results of the annual groundwater monitoring sampling event from our contractor and results were shared with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. There were no surprises, and we continue to find very low levels of contamination which can be attributed to the facility. This serves as a good reminder of the hierarchy of waste management! Reduce Consumption, Reuse and Recycle when possible, and properly dispose of the remainder
For more information – visit denaliborough.org/solidwaste
- In an unfortunate incident, the 966 loader suffered a cracked hydraulic hose and lost all of its fluid. Based on the scale of the issue, the loader was transported to Fairbanks for service. In the meantime, we once again rented an excavator to meet our cover needs. We will address these unexpected challenges in the budget amendment.

Land Planning

- USPS and Google have adopted Denali Borough addresses- In an exciting step forward, Land Planner Marsha Lambert learned that the United States Postal Service and Google have formally accepted Denali Borough street addresses. Voter Registration is pulled from the Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) application information. A reminder- borough addresses are a Physical Street Address for location purposes. It provides a verifiable address for services such as banks, utilities, etc. Residents should continue to use their Post office box and highway/rural route location for mailing address purposes.
- We solicited and received a proposal for a preliminary plat of Phase 1 of the Panguingue Lignite Subdivision. I plan to bring forward an allocation Ordinance in December with more details on the scope of work, timeline, and additional opportunity for public participation.

Community Development

- Community Change Grant- This grant has been a heavy lift and we expect to submit the application this week. The grant request includes over \$17.8 million in projects, largely upgrades to the school buildings and community centers. A big thank you to our partners, Denali Borough School District, Denali Community Foundation, Alaska Municipal League, Tri-Valley Volunteer Fire Department, and McKinley Park Community Club and fire department. Big thanks to Community Development Director Stephanie Ford who has led the effort for our borough staff team.
- We held two successful vaccination clinics last week, using a new model and partner. Fairweather Medical LLC, under a contract with Public Health Nursing, managed the clinics from start to finish with minor

support required from the borough and NPS staff. Over 100 community members received nearly 200 vaccinations between the two-day event.

- The Denali Area Airport Planning Study, Stakeholder Advisory group met last week and discussed a draft Vision statement and associated goals. The group also reviewed public survey data.

Emergency Management

- The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) will be meeting Tuesday December 19th at the school in Anderson.
- New (Cantwell, Healy, Denali Borough) and updated (McKinley Village, Anderson) Community Wildfire Protection Plans are drafted, and available for public review. Public meetings will be held December 3rd and 4th to review and discuss the drafts. Visit the borough website for the meeting location and times.
- Clear Fire Road Repair- Emergency Manager Forest Shreeve, Treasurer Allison Johnson, and I attended a kick-off for a Public Assistance award to repair Kobe area roads, following the 2022 Clear fire. Approximately \$190,000 was awarded, to “return impacted roads to pre-fire conditions.” We expect to post a project solicitation in time for the summer 2025 construction season. This is much appreciated assistance and will repair small segments of Kobe Rd, Battle Axe Lane, and Rochester Way.
- Generator Update – New generators for the Cantwell and McKinley Village fire hall are built and available for pick-up in Fairbanks. We anticipate delivery and connection with the buildings to occur in the next few weeks.

Items of Interest

- I attended an informational meeting about the Alaska Broadband Grant, hosted by the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development. The first phase of the Grant is complete, the “Mapping Challenge,” where the state identified areas designated as unserved, or underserved. In the Denali Borough, they identified 788 locations unserved by high-speed internet, and 543 underserved by high-speed internet – between the five communities of Cantwell, Carlo Creek, Denali Park, Healy, and Anderson. For the borough to play a role in applying for this grant, we will need to work closely with our internet service provider, Matanuska Telephone Association, and each local community.

Denali Borough School District

- We received the audit of the school district; final Denali Borough audit work continues.

Local Elections

- Appreciation to Clerk Amber Renshaw and Administrative Clerk Salena Mirasole for facilitating yet another successful election. Thanks also to election judges and canvas committee members who assisted in managing the election process.

Alaska Municipal League Conference

- The 74th Annual Local Government conference is December 9 – 13 in Anchorage. I would encourage any newly elected officials to consider attending the conference. Contact the borough office for more details.

We have much to be thankful for. Feel free to call or email me or staff if you have any questions.

- Chris