

1 **Denali Borough Assembly**
2 **Minutes of the Regular Meeting**
3 **September 8, 2021**

4
5 **PUBLIC HEARING**

6 **ORDINANCE 21-11: Conveyance of Borough Land for the Public Purpose of a**
7 **Highway Improvement Project near Mile 231**

8 There were no public comments.
9

10 **ORDINANCE 21-12: Denali Borough Code 4.12 Titled Encroachment Permit**

11 There were no public comments.
12

13 **ORDINANCE 21-13: Allow Electronic Participation for Borough Meetings**

14 There were no public comments.
15

16 **ORDINANCE 21-14: Allocating funds from the Land Management Capital Fund for the**
17 **Healy parcel boundary survey**

18 There were no public comments.
19

20 **REGULAR MEETING**

21 **CALL TO ORDER**

22 Presiding Officer Jared ZIMMERMAN called the regular meeting to order at 6:04 PM.
23

24 **ROLL CALL**

25 Assembly members present: Jake HILL, Joe CHATFIELD (arrived at 6:23 PM), Jeff
26 STENGER (arrived at 6:40 PM), Lisa MINER (arrived at 6:24 PM), Jared ZIMMERMAN,
27 Dominic CANALE, Eileen HOLMES and Tallon SHREEVE. Mayor Clay Walker was also
28 present.

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30 Assembly members absent: Krista ZAPPONE.
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32 Jake HILL MOVED to excuse Assembly Member ZAPPONE. The motion was seconded.
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34 The VOTE TO EXCUSE PASSED by unanimous consent.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

Healy area resident James Gauven stated the following:

- Reported that he experienced a near miss accident at the blind corner along the Otto Lake road involving a commercial ATV operator and expressed continued concern regarding the commercial ATV use, especially the unguided commercial ATV use, in the Otto lake and Dry Creek area.
- Stated that he is hoping to see the Commercial Land Use Permit system enacted and would like the user fees collected to be used for road and trail maintenance in the permit area.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Jake HILL MOVED to amend the agenda by removing Finance Report as an agenda item. The motion was seconded.

The VOTE TO AMEND PASSED by unanimous consent.

Jake HILL MOVED to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded.

The VOTE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED PASSED by unanimous consent.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

August 11, 2021 ASSEMBLY REGULAR MEETING

Dominic CANALE MOVED to approve the minutes from the August 11, 2021 Assembly Meeting. The motion was seconded.

The VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES PASSED by unanimous consent.

REPORTS

PARTNER REPORTS

Vanessa Juszczak with the Denali Chamber of Commerce and Discover Denali provided the attached written report (See Attachment A).

Seamus Siddall with Horizon Medical reported the following:

- COVID-19 vaccination and testing services will continue to be provided by Horizon Medical through the fall and winter with a change in location to the Tri-Valley Community Center starting in October.

- As our borough transitions from summer into fall, Horizon Medical will consider offering vaccinations weekly instead of a daily.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

Planning Commissioner Baxter Mercer reported the following:

- The commission reviewed and approved an amended Plat at their August meeting.
- The commission reviewed and approved a public access easement in the Otto lake/Dry Creek area at their August meeting.
- The commission will host in-person Open Houses on September 27th in Cantwell, on September 28th in Healy and on September 29th in Clear for the public to review the proposed Street Naming maps.

SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT

Superintendent Dan Polta verbally highlighted information provided in the attached written report (see Attachment B).

MAYOR REPORT

Mayor Clay Walker verbally highlighted information provided in the attached written report (see Attachment C).

ASSEMBLY COMMENTS

Assembly members offered the following comments:

- Thanked those that provided reports and the public for their participation.
- Expressed appreciation for the Planning Commission.
- Expressed appreciation for the Denali Chamber of Commerce and all of our local businesses.
- Expressed appreciation for the school board.
- Expressed appreciation for Horizon Medical and the COVID services they are providing to the community.
- Welcomed Teresa Floberg as a Denali Borough employee.

COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCE REQUEST

There were no communication and appearance requests.

DRAFT ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE 21-15: AMEND DENALI BOROUGH CODE 9.12 STREET NAMING METHODS

1 Jake HILL MOVED to introduce Ordinance 21-15. The motion was seconded.
2 Mayor Walker stated that the map included in this section of code needed to be updated.

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4 The roll call VOTE TO INTRODUCE ORDINANCE 21-15 passed unanimously.

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6 Jake HILL MOVED to postpone Ordinance 21-15. The motion was seconded.

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8 The VOTE TO POSTPONE PASSED by unanimous consent.

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10 **PENDING ORDINANCES**

11 **ORDINANCE 21-11: CONVEYANCE OF BOROUGH LAND FOR THE PUBLIC PURPOSE**
12 **OF A HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT NEAR MILE 231**

13 Dominic CANALE MOVED to approve Ordinance 21-11. The motion was seconded.

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15 The roll call VOTE TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 21-11 passed unanimously.

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17 **ORDINANCE 21-12: DENALI BOROUGH CODE 4.12 TITLED ENCROACHMENT PERMIT**

18 Jake HILL MOVED to approve Ordinance 21-12. The motion was seconded.

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20 The roll call VOTE TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 21-12 passed unanimously.

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22 **ORDINANCE 21-13: ALLOW ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION FOR BOROUGH**
23 **MEETINGS**

24 Dominic CANALE MOVED to approve Ordinance 21-13. The motion was seconded.

25
26 Jake HILL MOVED to amend Ordinance 21-13 by adding the words “when necessary” in the
27 ballot proposition language. The motion was seconded.

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29 The VOTE TO AMEND PASSED by unanimous consent.

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31 The roll call VOTE TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 21-13 AS AMENDED passed unanimously.

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33 **ORDINANCE 21-14: ALLOCATING FUNDS FROM THE LAND MANAGEMENT CAPITAL**
34 **FUND FOR THE HEALY PARCEL BOUNDARY SURVEY**

1 Dominic CANALE MOVED to approve Ordinance 21-14. The motion was seconded.

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3 The roll call VOTE TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 21-14 passed unanimously.

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5 **RESOLUTIONS**

6 **RESOLUTION 21-13: HEALY PARCEL BOUNDARY SURVEY AWARD**

7 Jake HILL MOVED to approve Resolution 21-13. The motion was seconded.

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9 The roll call VOTE TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 21-13 passed unanimously.

10

11 **OTHER BUSINESS**

12 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

13 There were no public comments.

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15 **ASSEMBLY COMMENTS**

16 Assembly members expressed appreciation for a productive and cordial meeting,
17 thanked healthcare workers, and encouraged the public to wear masks in public spaces.

18

19 **TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

20 The next Assembly meeting will be Wednesday, October 13, 2021 at 6:00 PM

21

22 **ADJOURN**

23 Dominic CANALE MOVED to adjourn. The motion was seconded.

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25 The MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 7:57 PM by unanimous consent.

26

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29 APPROVED: _____

30 Jared Zimmerman, Presiding Officer

31

32 ATTEST: _____

33 Amber Renshaw, Borough Clerk

Date Approved: _____

Vanessa Juszczak
Denali Chamber of Commerce and Discover Denali

My apologies for the late notice, I had a family need come up and will not be in attendance tonight.

There is a primary area of concern for myself and local businesses at this time, which I would like to share - which is the potential status of the Denali Park Road for the 2022 season.

I understand the wheels involved in this situation move slowly, but local businesses need an answer sooner than I am afraid they will get one.

My requests for a meeting with local administrators have gone unanswered.

While the Discover Denali Visitor Centers mission is to promote the Denali Borough and its communities, as a destination for recreation and tourism - the sad fact remains, that many people see the Denali National Park only as a road experience.

And, as seen from just our recent closure, many visitors may choose to re-examine their plans.

The potential effects on local businesses are clearly significant. They will be even more significant if they dump resources into advertising, hiring, inventory - and are surprised with a late announcement from National Park Service - or if they are forced to refund deposits and bookings, due to cancellations.

I would encourage both the Mayor's office and the Borough Assembly to request early and transparent communications, from NPS to the local community - so that the businesses, as well as our local government can be best prepared.

I will save further updates for next month, and hope you have a short and productive meeting.

Vanessa Juszczak



**Superintendent's Report
Denali Borough Assembly
Wednesday, September 8th, 2021**

Dear Denali Borough Assembly and Mayor Walker,

1. Appreciation/Congratulations

- a. Thank you to all of our staff members who each worked hard to prepare to welcome our students on our first day of school on August 25th. From our maintenance and custodial crew preparing the physical building to our TA's and teacher preparing the classrooms and lessons, to our tech crew for updating computers and systems, to secretarial and admin staff coordinating schedules, to our PEAK team working with families on their ILP's, and more who I'm probably omitting, the start of a school year is a massive team effort. It's never easy and this year is another one for the history books with the ongoing pandemic, transition to a new student information system, new door lock system, and frustratingly heavy rains.
- b. Congratulations to DBSD former teacher Gretchen Striker who was named a finalist for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). This is the same honor that former DBSD teacher Tricia Turley also received.

2. 2021-22 Smart Start -

- a. ARPA/ESSER III Grant - We completed the final application paperwork for the ESSER III grant provided in the ARPA. We will continue to update related documents and internal mitigation plans as required under this grant. We also received notification that the state level plan under ARPA was approved. This releases the final 1/3 tranche of funding to the state in this grant.
- b. Screening Testing - Letitia Stratton is expanding her role with DBSD and is working with Nurse Keith to expand our offering of screening tests to students and staff in our buildings. Eric Filardi will also be trained and able to provide this at Anderson School and Justin Mason will offer this at Cantwell. Regular screening testing is a powerful tool to catch cases before they become an outbreak and cause widespread infection and close contacts. Testing at school also reduces the number of days for staff and students out of school with its ability to confirm that an illness is not COVID.
- c. Tri-Valley Combined Class Split - Tri-Valley had two class periods that had a large number of students from two grade levels which also included

Mission Statement

Nurturing, empowering and inspiring today's student to positively shape tomorrow's world.

students who were not eligible to receive a coronavirus vaccine. We were able to expand Jennifer Graham's teaching role with us and Daryl Frisbie agreed to teach an additional section. This allowed us to split these classes and better allow proper distancing for these students.

- d. Overall Status of the State - Coronavirus infections and hospitalization continue to increase. Several school districts are reporting cases in their schools, impacting instruction. For example, the Mat-Su Borough School District has shifted two school to distance learning and required masks at a handful of others in response to cases in the schools and communities. Fairbanks is discussing their mitigation strategies and possible masking requirement at this week's board meeting. DHSS has explicitly asked school districts to help with contact tracing on school related cases. Anchorage School District reported that their mitigation practices, including universal masking reduced the number of days students missed in-person learned this school year by over 8,000 student days. Alaska Public Health staff are overwhelmed with the number of cases and are not able to investigate and intervene with close contacts in school cases in a timely manner to help limit the risk of a large outbreak from school related cases.

3. Strategic Planning

- a. Core Planning Team - I continue to confirm with all current members of the Core Planning Team for their commitment and availability to continue in this role. Once the have been received, I'll invite additional new members to balance the community perspectives and backgrounds on this team.
- b. Strategic Planning Retreat - The Strategic Planning Retreat will be held in Fairbanks from October 15th - 17th.

4. Finances

- a. FY21 Audit - We completed our exit interview with our audit firm, Altman Rodgers. They are now preparing the draft report for our review. This leads to a second draft and then final report. In the exit interview they said that believe it will be a clean audit with no findings. Our final year end, unrestricted fund balance is approximately \$1,775,000, and will be confirmed in the final report.
- b. FY22 Budget - Reena and I continue to refine expense and revenue adjustments for the current school year. Based on enrollment projection it is likely that the hold harmless provisions in state statute will be applied to our state funding calculations. This will limit the impact of low enrollment on district revenue but not negate it.

5. Facilities

- a. Anderson Roof Project - All construction work is complete. All parties are in the process of completing the final closeout paperwork. Our one year

construction warranty will begin when we receive this paperwork, expected in mid-October.

- b. Tri-Valley Roof - Our maintenance crew was able to trace and identify the cause of our leaks. In our old sections of roof, there are drains to collect water. This water is directed inside the building to a single pipe that runs the length of the second wing. This pipe itself exists the building in the back through the foundation footer, and then into a dry well. The water in the well disperses into the ground. This dry well is clogged, collapsed, or otherwise failing. This causes water to back up into the drainpipes. This in turn causes standing water to pool and rise on the roof. This water then rises about existing protrusions and leaks into the building. The immediate way to address this is to install pumps on the roof that will automatically come on when the water builds up. These pumps are on order. Longer terms solutions include renovating these sections of roof as identified in our CIP plan and/or fixing the dry well.
- c. Door Locks - No Update
- d. TVS Generator - The switch needed for the generator is expected mid-October.

6. Student Assessments

- a. PEAKS - The results from last week's PEAKS testing will be released this week. Following this release we will begin sending these score results home to parents and sharing with teachers.
- b. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) - DBSD was informed that we were selected for students in grades 4 and 8 to participate in this nationwide assessment.

7. Personnel

- a. Certified Staff
 - i. As mentioned above Jennifer Graham's teaching time has been expanded slightly. Daryl Frisbie agreed to teach an additional course above the contractual instructional time for a teacher.
- b. Classified Staff
 - i. We accepted the resignation of Eric Story, maintenance worker at Anderson. We are advertising for a replacement.
 - ii. We adjusted hours of several current staff members to we could meet the instructional needs for this school year.
- c. Exempt Staff
 - i. No updates

Dan Polta
Superintendent
Denali Borough School District

DENALI BOROUGH

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Clay Walker, Mayor

September 2021 Mayor's Report to the Denali Borough Assembly

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

2020 U.S. Census

- The first round of numbers from the 2020 U.S. Census are in and they are disappointing for the Denali Borough. **Our population has changed from 1,826 in 2010 to 1,619 in 2020 – a decline of over ten percent.** The interior of Alaska overall lost population. While I don't have confidence in the accuracy of the count, there are few courses of action to seek a remedy, especially given the limited data the borough collects.
- This decline in population will result in a **decline in revenues** – namely the annual federal PILT payment.

Redistricting based upon changing population

- The **State of Alaska Redistricting Board** has commenced the work of adjusting Alaska's **legislative districts** to fit the new population distributions. On their website <https://www.akredistrict.org/>, you'll find information about their work, an interactive map to construct legislative districts, and a way to make recommendations or public comment to the board. It is likely that our current House District 6 will look very different when the board completes their work and forwards a new legislative district map in November 2021.
- When the US Census releases more detailed census block data, the **Denali Borough** will need to begin the work of ensuring that our current election districts meet apportionment standards. It is possible that the borough will need to **adjust our districts to be fairly apportioned.**

Memorandums of Agreements (MOAs) with the Dept. of Health and Social Services (DHSS)

- The borough has two active MOAs with DHSS by which the borough is helping to support the COVID-19 health care response boroughwide, primarily through the **availability of free COVID testing and vaccination services.** The borough has **requested amendments to the MOAs extending the duration and increasing the dollar amount.**

Horizon Medical Partnership

- The borough has been pleased with the COVID testing and vaccination service provision of our partner, Horizon Medical, who has operated out of the Canyon Clinic through the summer. With the closing of that seasonal facility in September, the borough and Horizon are **working toward the continuation of service delivery** and will provide updates when the location and time changes are finalized. See the Horizon website for current offerings: www.horizonmedicalak.com.

FEMA reimbursement

- The FEMA Public Assistance reimbursement of prior borough expenses of \$87,421 relating to COVID testing and transportation is now finalized. The borough's CARES account will be supplemented by this amount.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) reporting

- In a timely manner, the borough submitted the first report on ARPA funding, reporting that we have not spent any of the \$207,000 received to date. We plan to use these funds to back-fill lost tax revenue and help meet our financial obligation to education in the borough.

Mayor's Trip into Park

- I thank the National Park Service and the Murie Science and Learning Center for their contributions (vehicle plus access) to a successful meeting of the regional mayors and tour into Denali National Park. The City of Anderson Mayor Samantha Thompson and City of Fairbanks Mayor Jim Matherly were unable to attend, but we had Fairbanks North Star Borough Bryce Ward, City of Nenana Mayor Josh Verhagen and City of North Pole Mayor Mike Welsh on this full day tour. We were able to **see first-hand the extent of the issue at "Pretty Rocks Slide" on Polychrome** as well as spend the day discussing local and state issues.

New Hire Update

- We were very pleased by the number of well-qualified applicants we received in posting the part-time Administrative Aide position vacated by Trena Haugen. After four candidate interviews and much consideration, **Teresa Floberg was selected for the position**. Teresa brings a strong educational (BS in Business Admin) and professional (Current GM of lodge and prior non-profit and grant writing) experience to the position, which was redefined as **Community Development Administrative Aide**. Welcome Teresa to the team when you get a chance! She starts September 21.

UAS Update

- As I continue my slow steady pursuit of a Master's of Public Administration, I am now more than halfway finished the coursework. After completing my summer class, Public Employment Law, my fall course is Public Sector Leadership. This semester those classes are on Thursday evening, so I will be missing a few upcoming School Board meetings.

COVID Update

- **Local case counts are at their highest over the course of pandemic right now**. Our nearest hospital (FMH) has its most COVID patients to date and the state's hospital system is stressed by the burden of increasing COVID cases, the great majority of which are in persons who have yet to receive the vaccine.
- Please do your part to **help protect our health care system capacity** by doing everything you can to not need hospital care. That means being extra careful in fall activities and protecting yourself from COVID through vaccination. While there are numerous break-through cases, these cases are far less likely to result in hospitalization than in those who are unvaccinated.
- When you get a chance, **thank a health care worker**. We have a dedicated group of providers here in the borough who have been working very hard to meet the increasing need. They deserve our gratitude.

Happy September, happy fall. As always, feel free to contact me or staff with questions.

-Clay